

RECORD OF WORTENIA WAR

ウォルテニア 戦記

IV

Ryota Hori

保利亮太

ILLUST. bob



RECORD OF WORTENIA WAR

– Wortenia Senki –

- VOLUME 2 -

**Rozeria Kingdom Civil War
(III)**

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[Hasutsuki]

「我らに勝利を！」

ローゼリア王国に栄光を！」

RECORD OF WORTENIA WAR

ウォルテニア 戦記



「私が交渉役として参った次第です」

「亮真様……どうするつもりかな？」

「……」



「御^お屋^{やかた}形様の予感は
当たりましたぞ」



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Ryota Hori

保利亮太



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HOLY
QWILTANTIA
EMPIRE



KINGDOM OF HELNESGOULA

O'LTORMEA EMPIRE

SOUTHERN KINGDOMS

KINGDOM
OF
XARGODA

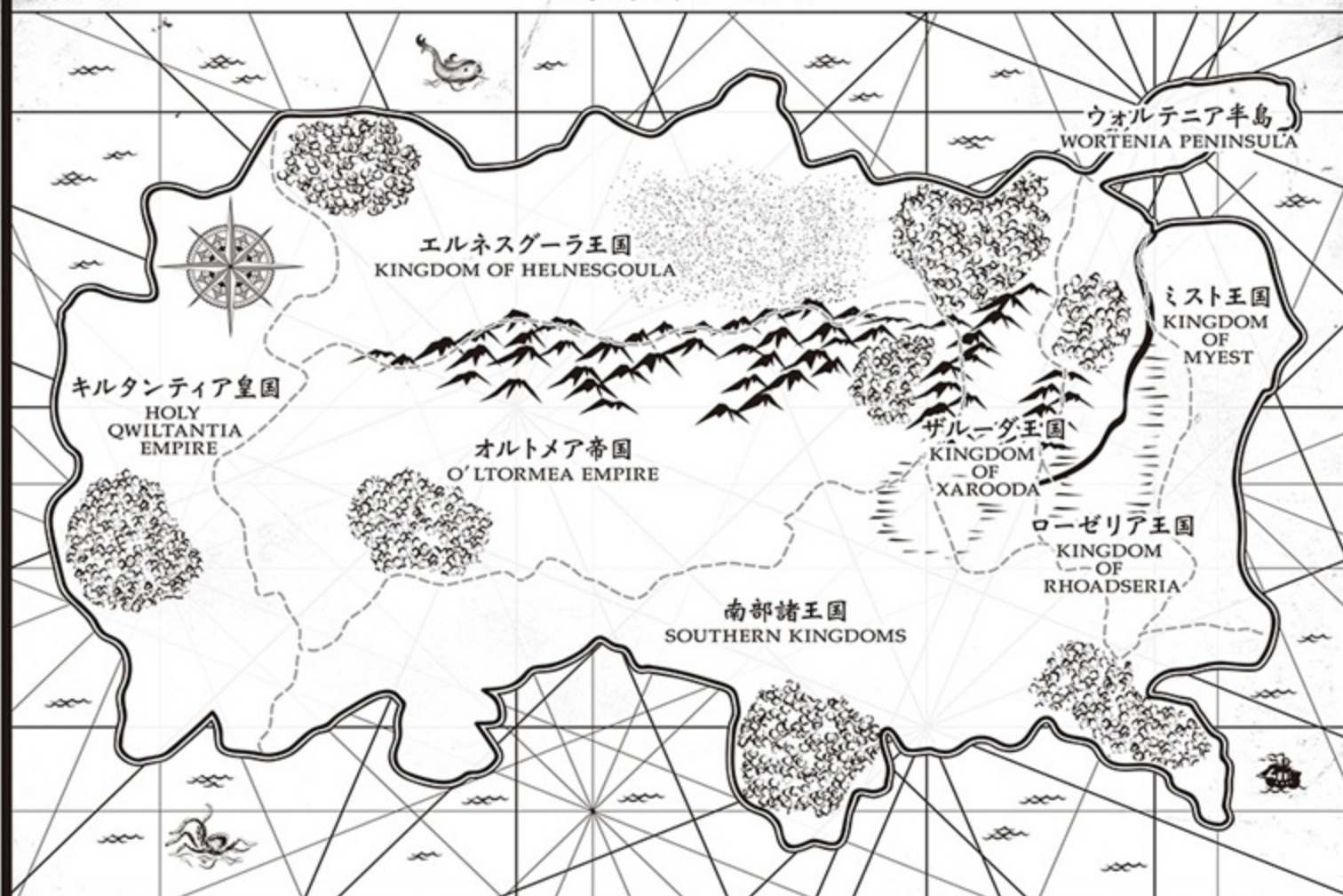
KINGDOM
OF
RHOADSERIA

KINGDOM
OF
MYEST

WORTENIA PENINSULA

WORLD MAP of 《RECORD OF WORTENIA WAR》

西方大陸 地図



✧ オルトメア帝国

西方大陸中央部に存在する帝国。覇権主義を掲げ、西方大陸統一に乗り出す。

✧ ローゼリア王国

西方大陸の東部に覇を唱える三国の一つ。豊かな水量を誇るテーベ河のお陰で非常に豊かな穀倉地帯を持つ。西をザルーダ王国に、東をミスト王国に挟まれており、戦乱が絶えない。国政の実権はホドラム将軍とゲルハルト公爵に奪われている。

✧ ザルーダ王国

西にオルトメア帝国と隣接する山岳国家。峻険な山々に囲まれた天然の要害と、豊富に産出される鉄鉱石のお陰で、なんとか帝国の侵略を食い止めている状態。東に隣接するローゼリア王国から輸入される食糧に大きく依存している。

✧ ミスト王国

西でローゼリア王国と隣接する貿易国家。中央大陸とも交易が盛んで、西方大陸最大の貿易都市であるフルザードを支配下に持つ。

✧ エルネスグーラ王国

西方大陸北部を支配する王国。覇権主義を掲げ、中部への侵入を悲願としている。オルトメア帝国とは犬猿の仲。

✧ キルタンティア皇国

西方大陸西部を支配する皇国。オルトメア帝国とは冷戦状態が続く。南部地方への侵攻を画策している。

✧ 南部諸王国

西方大陸南部に群生する小国の総称。西方大陸最大の激戦地帯で、紛争が絶えない。

Chapter 32

Decisive Battle ④

Day 176 after being summoned to another world.

Lupis looked at the face of the man that appeared before her.

Black eyes and black hair.

An average body build with yellow-toned skin.

Apart from the difference in height, the characteristics of the man are very similar to those of Mikoshiba Ryouma.

Humans with some similar features is fairly common, but this is the first time she has seen someone who has all the same characteristics as another.

Needless to say, the other one with such characteristics is Mikoshiba Ryouma.

“Please don’t stare at me that intently, it’s making me feel embarrassed...”

Usually the one who say these sort of lines would be someone like a princess. When it is said by a man, however, it gives the impression of someone shy.

And the man standing of her was giving off that vibe.

He has a decent-looking face with some hints of wrinkles, and his belly slightly protrudes.

If one were to guess, his age is probably around 40.

But despite having such a body, his arms are thick and robust, implying that he's a warrior.

Although the man spoke in a gentle tone, Lupis did not let her guard down.

“Well, I suppose it can't be helped that you are wary of me since I did disturb you in the middle of the night like this. That being said, can't we at least sit down?”

Sudou proceeded to sit down on a chair without waiting for Lupis' reply.

"I will ask once again, who are you?"

Lupis thrust her sword at Sudou's neck, who was sitting on the chair.

"I'm called Sudou Akitake."

"Your aim?"

"To negotiate with you, Princess Lupis."

"How did you managed to sneak in here?"

"I swam from the upstream of Thaves river and went to the campsite. Oh right, the commander here is Mikoshiba-san, right? Since he seems to have placed extra security near the moat, the river banks had minimal protection... Because of that, I was able to come here."

Sudou let out a laugh as he finished his sentence.

(This guy... He swam through the Thaves river...)

Certainly, people with know-how would be able to swim.

And there is no denying that the security near the river banks is way more relaxed than other places.

The question now is why he came here.

"What is it that you want to negotiate?"

"Could you please withdraw this dangerous thing first? It is rather difficult to speak when your highness' sword is pointing at my neck."



Lupis looked him in the eyes to see if he was telling the truth.

Nevertheless, it is indeed rude to point a sword at anyone while holding a negotiation.

Even if that is a suspicious man who sneaked into a princess' tent in the middle of the night.

After some consideration, Lupis pulled back her sword.

Although she pulled it back, she still kept the sword near her just in case, as insurance.

“Good... Let us negotiate in a peaceful manner.”

“No need for chit-chat. State your goal.”

Princess Lupis gazed at Sudou.

Despite being stared at, Sudou's expression remained relaxed.

“As you might have presumed, I'm serving Duke Gerhardt. Well, not quite exactly that but something along that line.”

Lupis decided to ignore his introduction.

She thought that if she responded to everything he said, it would take forever to reach his real objective.

With her intention for no idle talk made clear, Sudou straightened up his expression.

“Let's see... I'll be blunt. Duke Gerhardt wants to capitulate to Princess Lupis.”

“Capitulate? You don't mean surrender?”

Lupis tried to rephrase Sudou's words.

Although she was lacking in experience, her educational background is far superior to that of an average person...

In this situation, either the man was sent to kill her or to deliver the surrender message from Duke Gerhardt.

“No, Duke Gerhardt really wants to capitulate to Princess Lupis.”

Lupis frowned at Sudou's reply.

“Are you even aware of your current situation? Why would I accept Gerhardt's capitulation now?”

Between surrendering and capitulating, the difference is huge.

In the case of surrendering, Duke Gerhardt would be executed.

All his territory and wealth would be confiscated.

On the other hand, in the case of capitulation, she couldn't just execute Gerhardt.

And although his territory would be significantly reduced, it couldn't be completely crushed. Additionally, some properties would need to be guaranteed as well.

In a war of good versus evil, the goal would usually be to force the enemy to surrender. Even when one side is capitulating, they still couldn't demand too much from such a position of weakness.

Because this fight is a fight for supremacy, Princess Lupis is not in a situation to care about Gerhardt's demands.

With this knowledge, Lupis immediately rejected Sudou's proposal.

What's more, Duke Gerhardt has been supporting an illegitimate child to become the queen, causing a huge rebellion in the kingdom.

From Lupis' point of view, Gerhardt is the culprit and mastermind behind everything.

It is impossible for her to even consider sparing his life.

That was, until the moment she heard the next words from Sudou.

“Mikhail Bahashu, does that name ring a bell?”

Lupis' expression changed drastically.

The name of the person she was just mourning came out of nowhere.

She could not hide her surprise.

“Eh?... What do you mean?... It can't be!”

The name of the man who was supposedly dead was mentioned by an enemy messenger.

This could only mean one thing.

“Don't tell me... Mikhail is...”

As she was speaking, something was suddenly thrown inside the tent.

Shuka

SyuSyu

Blades of wind flew past and struck the chair where Sudou was previously sitting.

“Eh?”

Lupis was left speechless.

The figure of Sudou who had the impression of being slow and sloppy had disappeared from the chair.

Sudou was able to react and stand up in the blink of an eye.

“That's dangerous, you know? No matter how suspicious I look, to attack out of nowhere is a little bit rude, don't you think?”

Sudou pulled out the chakram that was stuck in the chair.

“This is unusual... Someone capable of using this weapon... It was you, wasn't it, Mikoshiba Ryouma?”

As soon as he finished his sentence, another chakram came flying in Sudou's direction.

“Oh my, are you ignoring me?”

Sudou deflected the chakram using the chair.

Despite all of this, Sudou's tone of voice remained easy-going.

Ryouma continuously threw battle chakrams at him, one after another.

“Can't you at least say something? It feels like I'm talking to myself here.”

While saying that, Sudou threw a chakram in his hand back toward the entrance of the tent.

Sudou didn't expect to hit Ryouma with just that.

He only wanted to provoke Ryouma.

His eyes were vigilantly focused on the entrance of the tent not knowing that Ryouma had a plan.

“Your Highness! Here!”

Meltina appeared behind Princess Lupis by tearing the fabric tent.

“Meltina!”

“Your Highness! Hurry!”

After making their way out of the tent, the next thing the princess saw was a group of knights surrounding the tent.

“Please forgive me for the earlier blunder, your highness! I shall receive my punishment for this mistake later!”

Meltina said while bowing her head toward Princess Lupis.

“Mikoshiba-dono! Her highness is safe!”

As Meltina signalled, the surrounding knights stepped forward with torches in their hands.

“Do it!”

Following Ryouma's order, the Knights immediately threw the torches toward the tent.

“Wait! Don't kill him! Meltina! Please, bring the water!”

Lupis raised her voice in desperation.

(Not yet! From what Sudou said... Mikhail is...)

All her hope of seeing Mikhail again clung on Sudou's fate.

However, it was too late.

The torches ferociously set the tent ablaze.

Moreover, in the event that Sudou managed to somehow escape from the tent, the surrounding knights were ready with their swords.

“What are you talking about your highness? Isn't he an assassin?”

Meltina questioned the princess' unexpected demand.

After hearing that the princess was in a dangerous situation, she acted promptly according to Ryouma's order. Hence she was unable to comprehend the current situation.

She was not aware of the fact that Sudou had mentioned Mikhail's name.

“It's fine! Go help him, now!”

“But still... He's...”

The tent was wrapped in fire.

Normally, anyone trapped inside of a tent on fire would suffocate and eventually collapse due to the lack of air. This would leave them helpless from being burnt to death.

Sudou's chance of survival is almost impossible.

However, Meltina immediately heard a certain voice.

"Uooh! This guy..."

"Spear corps, forward!"

"Don't let him escape!"

Meltina heard the voices of the Knights from the opposite side.

"Meltina!"

"Yes, ma'am!"

While she hadn't grasped the situation entirely, she could tell that Princess Lupis clearly did not wish to kill the man.

Meltina decided to follow her order and told the knights to stand down.

"Geez... You sure are cruel, you know? Couldn't you spare me some mercy?"

Sudou appeared before Ryouma.

His clothes were burned in several places, yet he was as calm as ever.

"You bastard... Are you really human?"

The sight of Sudou walking effortlessly out of the tent cloaked in fire was really an astonishing sight, one that even Ryouma couldn't help but be surprised at.

"Oh! You've finally said something! Thank goodness!"

Ryouma ignored Sudou's comment and drew his sword silently.

“Oh? Back to the silent treatment? Geez, you're really an unsociable one...”

Byuu

Ignoring Sudou's words, Ryouma closed the distance between them in a single instant and scythed down his katana.

Clang

There was the sound of metal clashing as red sparks scattered between the two.

Without anyone noticing, Sudou had pulled out a dagger from somewhere.

“Can we settle this battle at a later date?”

Sudou said while defending against Ryouma with only a dagger.

(Is he being serious or not? Is this really so easy for him?)

The Knights enclosed the surroundings, unable to gauge Sudou's true intentions.

Doga!

Ryouma's right foot powerfully stamped the ground.

He had tried to stamp Sudou's foot, but Sudou had managed to avoid it.

Sudou used this chance to create some distance between them.

“Geez... You really intend on ignoring me huh? This is not the time for us to fight you know.”

Ryouma silently raised his sword and prepared for a powerful strike.

Murderous intent emanated from his eyes.



“Jodan-no-kamae? This is bad.”

Sudou sounded resigned to receiving the attack.

An attack launched from that stance would be two times heavier and stronger than normal.

And there's no technique that Sudou knew able to defend against it using only a dagger.

Even if he were able to defend against it, his body would be thrown down by the force.

(This bad... For me to die here is...)

But he hasn't run out of luck yet.

“Wait! Mikoshiba-dono!”

Meltina appeared, stopping Ryouma.

She was breathing so hard, it seemed she had run while shouting the whole way here.

“What's wrong? Why did you ask me to stop?”

Ryouma asked Meltina without changing his stance.

His line of sight was still directed toward Sudou.

“I don't know! But her highness asked me to stop you!”

“Her Highness Lupis? Is that true?”

“Indeed. There's no doubt. I received the order personally.”

Ryouma exhaled heavily and lowered his sword.

“Alright... But I still don't know the situation. Please bring the princess here. “

“I'm here...”

From behind the knight, Lupis stepped forward.

“...Can you explain what's going on here?”

Ryouma asked Lupis without sheathing his sword.

Ryouma saw no reason to keep such suspicious man alive.

Furthermore, Sudou might still bare his fangs.

“Fine then... Sudou, there's something I would like to ask as well! How about we change the setting first?”

“Sure, I don't mind. I also want to continue the previous conversation.”

Sudou replied, nodding his head in agreement.

“Then Ryouma, can you prepare a new tent? Meltina, go call Elena!”

“I understand... But please be careful...”

After saying that, Ryouma left the scene to follow Lupis' instruction.

Sudou made a doubtful expression after hearing Lupis' words.

“Your highness, why did you invite the others? I only want to talk with your highness directly.”

He thought that there should be a chance for negotiation if the princess was willing to listen.

And by not having him being killed, he knew that she was interested in Mikhail's well being.

But she had invited the others.

Why?

After all, this could be considered the Princess' personal affair.

Sudou assumed that the princess wouldn't want many people to hear about it.

"Since I will have to make a decision that will affect the kingdom as a ruler, I can't decide it arbitrarily. Or maybe you won't be able to talk if there's a lot of people?"

Sudou realized that Princess Lupis is still cautious of him.

(Fuuh... She's not as stupid as I thought. Well, with this I should be able to do something... She's someone without much experience anyway... The problem is that man. I was wondering what kind of person had killed Gaies-sama, but indeed, he seems troublesome...)

Sudou desperately held down the murderous intent that began to spring out from his heart.

It is not the time for him to confront Mikoshiba Ryouma yet.

Because there's a mission Sudou needs to complete.

(Even if I want to kill him, I won't be able to do it in any ordinary way... It would become dangerous if I force it here... Well, whatever. For now, I should prioritize my mission.)

Sudou quickly calculated his plan while giving his consent to Princess Lupis to talk in the presence of the others.

Chapter 33

Decisive Battle ⑤

Day 176 after being summoned to another world.

“With that being the case, Duke Gerhardt wishes to capitulate and ally himself with Princess Lupis once again... As a proof for negotiation, we will hand over Mikhail Banashu who is under our protection in Irachioon.”

Hearing Sudou's words, heavy air dominated inside the tent.

Everyone was speechless after hearing Sudou's words.

No rather, it's more correct that everyone was unable to think properly because Sudou's suggestion is that much of outrageous.

It was an unexpected situation where the mastermind of this war suggested capitulation and change allegiance before the decisive battle.

“Ane-sama... This situation... It's bad isn't it?”

Sara whispered close to Laura's ear.

“Indeed... Ryouma-sama's plan might get hindered because of this...”

Laura directed her line of sight with a blank expression the moment she heard Sudou's words.

There are 16 people currently present.

Princess Lupis, Meltina, Elena, Ryouma, naturally accompanying him are Laura, Sara, Leone, and Bolts, other than these people, there are also some influential nobles under Earl Bergston present.

Inside the tent, these people listened to Sudou's words intently while sitting at a round

table.

“As expected, the effects will be bad huh?”

“Yes, by looking at the current situation, that’s all I can imagine it will be...”

The two sisters are whispering to each other making sure that the others could not hear their voices.

Lione and Bolts, Lupis and Meltina, and the nobles who sat near each other began to also discuss the matter in low voices.

Only Ryouma and Elena remained silent.

“Ryouma-sama... With this situation, what he's going to do?”

Toward Sara's question, Laura was unable to find an answer.

In the end, they both directed their eyes toward Ryouma in silence.

No matter what the conclusion of this situation is, it was irrelevant for the sisters.

They have already sworn to follow the man named Mikoshiba Ryouma anywhere he goes.

Ryouma closed his eyes and leaned back into his chair relaxedly... By doing so, he tries to mask his emotions from the others but in his mind he had already begun analysing the situation and was trying to find the best possible solution

and there was only one way that he could imagine to break them out of their current situation...

(This really hurt my head...)

That was Ryouma's true feeling.

Even if she's someone whom he can trust as a human, in term of capabilities, she's not someone whom he can trust completely but Ryouma has never thought that Princess Lupis was this stupid.

(In Sudou's argument... He was asked to forgive the Duke who raises a rebellion against Rozeria kingdom's royal family with the reasoning that he's doing it because of the will of the last king... No matter how I see it, that's just too unreasonable... And now because Hodram betrays him, he wants to capitulate and pledge his allegiance to the princess with the reasoning that the General is rebelling against royal family? That's just too stupid...)

That's was Ryouma's honest opinion towards Sudou's words. Gerhardt was trying to play innocent by saying that he was only following the previous king's will.

Furthermore, because Hodram betrayed him, he wishes to show his loyalty to the kingdom because he couldn't forgive the general who's rebelling against the royal family with no proper reasoning Forcing Hodram to bear all the blame for the rebellion.

Another problem was that Sudou spoke these words in the presence of others and one could say that this situation has taken a turn for the worst.

Of course, Ryouma has no problem with the people who gathered but the one that Ryouma was looking at was Princess Lupis, from the beginning Ryouma had never trusted the Princess's capability in politics.

That is why he wanted to leave the judgement all to the Princess and although he wanted to praise the princess for realizing her shortcomings and gathering the others, he understood that the praise would be for nothing if the topic of discussion was about the exchange of Mikhail's return for the Duke's pardon. This topic was already bad but it got worse when she invited others to the discussion.

Why?

That because the conclusion can easily be seen.

(In the end, the princess does not want Mikhail to die huh...)

Ryouma's heart becomes cold.

Indeed Mikhail's is a man with great loyalty and high battle strength.

For the princess, he's one reliable and trustworthy retainer.

Thus, as a human being having the princess not wanting to kill him is a natural thing for that reason alone, Ryouma doesn't want to blame her for it.

However, a ruler must never show their wavering feelings and no matter the cost must repress them. The issue was not about Mikhail who was a reliable subordinate in the eyes of the princess but more about Gerhardt who wanted to be pardoned. No matter how reliable one life is, it couldn't be compared to the life of Gerhardt who began the rebellion in the first place, to spare such person for a single retainer was unthinkable...

Although the princess has not yet openly declared her intentions, Ryouma was convinced that the Princess wanted to help save Mikhail. If not, the princess would surely think of taking Sudou's life, since he was an unknown person that had entered the Princess's tent without permission. It was an undeniable fact that Sudou is an invader among the people in the tent, so no one would complain if the princess decided to take his life

The princess went through all the trouble of gathering all her important personal to listen to Sudou's words, so regardless of her decision, her heart could easily be seen.

('I want to help Mikhail, so I want to grant Gerhardt wish', that must be her line of thoughts. However, she seems to realize that alone can't become a justification thus she tried to gather the others so that it won't become skewed later.)

If the princess were to accept the demands just like that, it would obviously have many repercussions. After all the one she was about to spare was the mastermind behind the whole rebellion. That reason alone was why Lupis gathered the others, to spread responsibility for these actions as much as possible.

"Well then, I would like to hear everyone's opinion."

Ryouma wanted to click his tongue immediately after hearing Lupis's words but no matter how annoying the situation was for him, he wouldn't allow himself to show his anger.

"Does anyone have any opinions?"

The room was silent to Princess Lupis's question while her gaze traversed towards

each member in the room. However there was no response, since everyone already understood that the Princess had already decided what to do in her heart.

Ryouma himself did not consider the life of Mikhail to be equal to the life of Gerhardt's, it can be said to compare the life of a mere knight to a demon lord but it would be useless for Ryouma to voice his reasons since if he were to suggest abandoning Mikhail he would have to do it after the meeting.

"Do you want Mikhail to die!"

"You assume that even without trying to help!"

"What are you talking about newcomer!"

Those kinds of words awaited for him if he took the wrong step, the ones most likely to argue were Mikhail's colleagues, the knights...

Furthermore, even if Ryouma were to suggest abandoning Mikhail here, the Princess will probably not accept it. If that were the case, Ryouma would be painted as the villain and besides that, Mikhail had been captured under Ryouma's command so if he were to suggest abandoning him, he might be accused of wanting to kill him.

Sometimes even the most sound arguments will be dismissed due to human empathy. However when a ruler has been drowning in kindness, distortion is bound to occur somewhere. If there was no room for the ruler to hear the suggestions then it would be better for Ryouma to hold off on the suggestions.

In such situation, Ryouma felt Elena's gaze.

"It's useless..."

Ryouma shook his head while he murmured toward Elena in a low voice.

He understood what she wants to say from her gaze.

However, if she said that, Elena would definitely be accused of being a bad person...

"If that is the case then, let me..."

“Please stop. If the princess holds any distrust toward you here, it will become harder to rebuild the future.”

He immediately denies Elena's suggestion.

For her, she has not gained a trust from Princess Lupis similar to that of Mikhail and Meltina.

Of course, for her to raise an objection in place of Ryouma would carry more weight since she still has the nickname of “Rozeria's White Goddess of War,” but he thinks that the princess will not give up Mikhail's life.

“Then what should we do? If we stay like this...”

Elena understood the danger of their present situation, just like Ryouma.

In exchange for Mikhail's life, Duke Gerhardt will survive from prosecution and in turn Princess Ladine will be acknowledged as royalty and be given the rights for the second succession.

With that, Princess Lupis was putting herself into a more dangerous position.

A mastermind of rebellion should be beheaded, that is common sense in this world.

If she were to pardon Gerhardt, it would mean she does not acknowledge Duke Gerhardt's actions as a means of rebellion but rather as the previous king's will and such will not be counted as a rebellion.

There was no other way then to let everything play out even if it were just mere wordplay.

(I guess the only one who can break through this situation is Meltina huh?)

Ryouma's line of sight is directed to Meltina, sitting next to Princess Lupis.

(Tch... She looks happy enough knowing that Mikhail is alive... Well, I can understand since her colleague survived... But she doesn't realize that the situation is just worsening with every passing second... I guess it's impossible for her, that means...)

He gives up on Meltina the moment he saw her smile, Ryouma then tries to desperately

think up of a method to breakthrough the tension...

(It is impossible to kill Gerhardt. Which means we can only kill Hodram in this battle...
The problem is after that, Princess Lupis can't control Gerhardt. Even if she abolish his
power, it will return someday... Wait a minute, someday?)

A cruel idea came up inside Ryouma's mind.

Indeed, there's no need for Ryouma to kill Gerhardt.

(Does she really want to die that badly?)

Ryouma planned to abandon Lupis.

.....

「私が交渉役として参った次第です」

「亮真様……どうするつもりかな？」

「……」



(Don't worry your highness, I will not betray you. However, if you stay like this, you will die. I don't know how many years it will take, but that day will come sooner... Of course, I will still advise Elena. However, I have no intention of helping you anymore. Afterward, please deal with the people in Rozeria kingdom by yourself. At best, try to take care of that Gerhardt afterward.)

Ryouma raised his hand to gain permission to speak.

“Then, can I say something?”

For a moment, Lupis's expression turn to one of pure fright...

She understood that her judgment was not right but her empathy refuses to abandon Mikhail's life.

“Go ahead, Ryouma.”

“Well then!”

Ryouma stood up from his chair after Lupis give her consent.

“I think we should accept Sudou's suggestion and accept Duke Gerhardt's allegiance.”

The tent shook after Ryouma said those words.

“Wha! Are you serious! Mikhoshiba-dono!”

“Yes, I'm serious, Earl Bergeston.”

Bergeston was a nobleman who had managed to acquire enough military knowledge to understand the situation, adding his experience in diplomacy and court politics, he was someone who could perceive the dangers of accepting Sudou's proposal.

“What are you aiming at?”

Ryouma's words had surprised Earl Bergeston to the point that the nobleman decided to ask Ryouma of his true intentions even in the presence of an enemy messenger.

“No, but I can't forsake Mikhail's life. Furthermore, there might be some truth in Duke Gerhardt words. Regardless, this would be better than war, no?, and considering that the area around Irachion is prospering, having a large scale war would undoubtedly affect their growth and lower their potential income, Wouldn't it be better if the princess were to accept the Duke's allegiance?”

There's no lies in Ryouma's word.

If they confront the duke's army, they will undoubtedly suffer greatly in the future due to the reduced tax revenue but even after Ryouma's explanation the Earl appeared to not be satisfied, since the reduction in tax revenue had already been calculated by the time they had decided to march towards Irachion.

“However your highness! When we accept the Duke's allegiance, we should add some condition from our side.”

“What do you mean?”

“We can't balance everything with only the return of Mikhail, we should confiscate the Gerhardts title and also ask him to pay reparations for the war.”

Hearing Ryouma's words Lupis then entered deep into her mind. She realized that the conditions provided by Sudou were extremely disadvantageous for her and the only reason she had considered his proposal in the first place is due to them using Mihail as leverage.

That's why she could somewhat understand Ryouma's aim but if she were to negotiate poorly, it could cost Mikhail's life and even though she had given up on him when she thought he was dead, now knowing that he was still breathing she wanted to help.

Between justice and her own empathy, her heart couldn't decide what was worth more to her.

“Fine... His Excellency the Duke has delegated me that he's willing to accept such condition... He will pay the reparation of war as much as 500 million Baht, and also relinquish his Duchy rank and title.”

“““5-500 million?”””

From inside the tent, loud voices arose. The amount Sudou mentioned was more than enough to cover the cost of the current war, a breath of relief overcame the nobles since they could give enough rewards to their subordinates while also securing enough income to bring into their own households.

“That’s not all, I want him to also promise to not attend any office within the court for the next five years...”

Sudou's face distorted after hearing Ryouma's words.

(Fuuh... He had expected that we would confiscate the Duke wealth and title... But he seems didn't expect that we would suspend him from office...)

For Ryouma, that condition is absolute. It was a measure put forth for the protection of Princess Lupis who in her current form would only be prey to Gerhardt. That’s why he proposed to suspend Duke from office for five years, this way the nobles who become the foundation for the princess will be able to root out all of Duke Gerhardt’s power from various branches of office.

“Fine... I accept your condition as Duke Gerhardt's representative. Is that enough? Your highness.”

Sudou asked Princess Lupis who's dumbfounded.

“Yes... That is enough...”

She had no choice but to nod.

“Very well... I will immediately return to Irachion and report to the Duke, and then I will bring Mikhail here.”

After saying that, Sudou lowered his head and immediately left the tent.

After Sudou’s departure, the meeting ends and the nobles leave to go about their

various duties, leaving only five figures in the meeting place, Ryouma, Bolts, Lione and the Marfisto sisters.

“Is it alright to just leave it at that?”

Toward Lione's question, Ryouma had no choice other than to nod his head.

“Although it is not what we really wanted, this is all I can do given the current situation... asking for any more would be impossible.”



Indeed Ryouma had done his best.

In fact, he wants to praise himself to be able to do that in such a situation.

“Will they manage it in five years?”

“Who knows? To be honest, I've never thought that far.”

Ryouma shrugged his shoulders while answering Sara's question. All, Ryouma did was buy time, if he were to put this in medical terms, Duke Gerhardt and Hodram were nothing more than dangerous disease which Ryouma planned to cleanse with surgery(Warfare). Lupis who is acting as the patient as requires the surgery, refuses to remove Gerhardt so with that being the case Ryouma had no other choice but to keep the disease at bay.

By keeping Gerhardt at bay for five years, the patient may naturally become stronger this in turn allows her to handle the disease by herself. There was nothing else Ryouma could do anymore but pray for Lupis's growth in the coming years.

All that remains is for the people of the kingdom to help guide her, Ryouma who had been rolled up into this war by chance was not someone who had to carry such responsibilities.

“Well with this, all that remains is Hodram and his 2.000 knights...”

Lione nodded her head after hearing Ryouma's words.

After dealing with Hodram, everything should be over.

“Will it be tomorrow or the day after tomorrow...”

“The day we attack Irachion eh?”

“Yes... It would be our last battle in this war!”

Ryouma nodded in agreement while answering Laura's question.

What remains is the decisive battle against Hodram.

The civil war in the Rozeria Kingdom is finally reaching its conclusion...

Chapter 34

Decisive Battle ⑥

Day 178 after being summoned to another world.

“Everyone! Finally, we've reached this far! This will be our final battle. The decisive battle will start from now on. From here on out, this is the battle to determine Rozeria Kingdom's future! The total number of the enemy force is 2500. I'm convinced that we will obtain victory if everyone does their best in this battle. I believe in the power of everyone! We will grasp victory! Glory to the Kingdom of Rozeria!”

““““OOOOOOOH! Victory to us! Glory to Rozeria Kingdom!”““““

「我らに勝利を！」

ローゼリア王国に栄光を！」

RECORD OF WORTENIA WAR

ウォルテニア 戦記



Responding to Princess Lupis' speech, the Knights raised their voices in a victory cry.

A knight standing at the front raised a fist high, and those standing in the back raised their spears high.

It was the voice of the Knight's resentment that had been repressed by General Hodram for many years.

They finally had the opportunity to gratify their grudges.

Furthermore, they are currently in a very advantageous situation.

Gerhardt had quickly put into action his intention of switching his allegiance.

As soon as he had presented the terms to the messenger, he immediately began working behind the scenes to take down the man currently controlling the nobles faction; Earl Adelheid...

Because of the measure put into place by Ryouma, the result was achieved quickly. The nobles faction also now strongly desired to curry favor with Princess Lupis in order to improve their standing.

The effect of Ryouma's measure was demonstrated dramatically.



"Ooh... Duke Gerhard-sama, I was rude the other day..."

Earl Aldeheid couldn't hide his embarrassment at the sudden visit of Duke Gerhardt. He greeted him with courtesy and tried not to be rude.

He was camped in the suburbs of Irachion with a tent.

"No no, It is me who is rude for intruding on you so suddenly like this."

This was just the usual lip service between nobles.

Aldeheid had supported Gerhardt for many years, but now Aldeheid had betrayed him for General Hodram's side.

Anyone would be angry in that situation.

But from his expression, no one would be able to see his anger.

He's an arrogant man, but he was a man who could adopt a humble attitude if necessary.

It might be said that his act is perfect.

Of course, for someone like Aldeheid who has worked under him for many years, Gerhardt's acting was transparent. But it did have the effect of making the conversation flow smoothly.

They could speak calmly without having to raise their voices.

"So? What is the issue? There's a lot of preparation needed to be done for the decisive battles according to General Hodram, so we don't have much time..."

Although Earl Aldeheid's words are polite, there was a hidden implication.

To put them bluntly, he has no time to talk with Duke Gerhardt right now.

"Oh, I'm sorry about that... But, do you know about this? The princess is going to make a bold move..."

Gerhardt said meaningfully.

There's no other choice for Earl Aldeheid than to listen to Duke Gerhardt.

"A bold move? Has Princess Lupis plotted something?"

If Princess Lupis is planning on doing something, the Earl definitely can't just ignore it.

Especially if it comes from Gerhardt.

"Her Highness seems to have split the knights into a few groups and headed towards the noble faction members' territories, to burn them."

"Wha! It can't be! There's no way her Highness would do that!"

It is no surprise for the Earl to react this way.

Right now is a war between countrymen, a civil war.

In other words, for Princess Lupis to burn the noble faction's territories is the same as hurting the economy of the Rozeria Kingdom, which in turn will also harm herself.

Razing and pillaging vallages is not an usual strategy in war, and is in fact a standard tactic. When used correctly, it can be a very effective tactic.

However, the Earl had never heard of such tactics being used against the nation's own territory.

"I can't believe it... For the princess to take such measures... Did something happen?"

Of course Earl Aldeheid would be surprised in this situation.

Gerhardt though is convinced that his report has captured the Earl.

"Indeed! That is because Her highness is a gentle person."

"Right? That's why there's no way the princess would do that."

The way Earl Aldeheid said those words is as if he does not realize that he has been taking part in a rebellion.

Well, for those who know Princess Lupis it is reasonable for them to understand that.

Gerhardt keeps on talking while also suppressing the urge to laugh.

"But... There's a man under her highness who does not care about such things..."

Hearing this, the Earl grew restless.

"A man... Is it that one that is being referred to as the demon?"

"That is right. It was that man, the one known as [The Demon of Irachion]"

"Mikoshiba Ryouma..."

Duke Gerhardt silently nodded his head hearing the name from Earl Aldeheid.

Having drowned 5.000 soldiers, and killed the remaining survivors with a smile on his face, he was known by the surrounding people as "The Demon of Irachion."

It was actually just the result of the rumor that Ryouma had spread, but, peasants who did not receive proper education easily believed it as the truth.

This rumor had also reached the Earl.

Most of them had heard the rumor because so many peasants had pleaded to return back home.

“But still... That rumor, is it really the truth?”

“Whether he's the demon or not, its just a rumor. However, his demon-like brutality and unforgiving personality is the truth.”

Of course, Mikoshiba Ryouma is not a demon.

Even though he did kill the enemy with no mercy, he's not someone who has the fetish of enjoying killing other people either.

However, the image of him being a demon is important right now.

“...Indeed if it was [The demon of Iracion] then, it might be possible... But, is it really the truth? That he's going to do what you've said?”

The Earl seems still unable to believe it yet.

Of course, Gerhardt also realized that.

But his aim is only to shake the Earl.

“Well, I told you that I just heard such rumor. Whether to believe it or not it is up to you... Well then... I can't disturb you more than this... I will leave now.”

“Eh? Are you going back already? You don't have to hurry like that!”

The Earl tried to detain Duke Gerhardt as if forgetting his first words.

The Earl seems to feel uneasy already.

That is why the Earl wants to hear the information more clearly.

“No no, It is not good for me to get in the way of your work... Well, if you feel concerned

about my story, how about ask the merchants in the city. Since I also heard the information from there. The person who told me the story would surely tell you the story in more detailed.”

Since he said that , the Earl couldn't detain him much longer.

“I understand... Thank you for telling me such an interesting story.”

“No no, I apologize for disturbing your busy work. Well then, excuse me.”

Gerhardt left the tent.

The Earl immediately gathered his aides.

He wants to ascertain the truth of the rumor that Duke Gerhardt had left.

“Well then, is that rumor is the truth?!”

Earl Aldeheid was amazed at the report that his aides brought to him.

“It is unknown whether the rumor is true or not... But it is true that the merchants who came to Irachion spread such rumor...”

His adjutant’s words hit him.

The nobles have a certain instinct imprinted on them.

That is to always maintain their family name, power, and territory as the top priorities.

They are stubborn when it comes to their territory.

They have no intention of cherishing their farmers. However, there's also no lord who would keep silent when their territory is being damaged.

To have their home burned down is the same as losing their stronghold. Not only are their families there, but they also gather militia there. Now, there are only women left at home, meaning defending is almost impossible.

(This is bad... Really bad... But, what should I do?)

The Earl was filled with anxiety.

If the rumors are true, then there's no other choice but to go back and protect his territory and family.

But returning to his territory without obtaining anything just leaves debt.

Although his subordinates have not yet gone out to battles, he can't leave without any wages either.

Even the peasants who've been conscripted ended up leaving their work.

If they returned home with nothing, then it would create dissatisfaction.

(But... If that is the truth then... My family... My wife and grandchildren...)

It would be good if they only end up being sold to a slave trader.

He would still be able to purchase their freedom.

However, the person he is dealing with is the man known as [The demon of Irachion].

He will kill mercilessly, even if it's a small girl...

This fear grasped Earl Aldeheid's heart tightly.

His son, who was beside him, was unable to understand his father's distress.

But it was also clear that they both want to return to their territory as soon as possible, for their wife and children.

"Earl-sama! Please excuse me."

A soldier appeared in the entrance of the tent.

He seems to have brought some report.

Earl Aldeheid turned to dismiss the interruption.

"What is it?! I told you not to disturb me."

But the soldier hesitatingly tried to say something.

"I understand but... Viscount Romane and the other nobles want to meet your Excellency. I told them that your Excellency does not want to be disturbed, but they said it was urgent... What should I do?"

The Earl sighed because he knew exactly why the Viscount and the others had come.

"...I understand, let them come."

"Yes!"

While watching the soldier's back, the Earl turned to his son.

"What do you think about this?"

"I think, my thought is the same as father's..."

"You too? Then what should we do?"

The Earl was happy that his son had grown up to be a wise man just like him.

"I think we should go back to our territory..."

"Your son's is right!"

Several people came into the tent.

"Oh, I see all of you have come because of this emergency. But what are you going to do about it? With the Princess' forces this close, it would be impossible for us to return to our territories."

The Earl asked the small, middle-aged man that entered the tent.

He sat down in a chair abruptly, but no one paid attention to the small discourtesy when there were more important things to discuss.

"Earl, I wish to say this plainly. I'm planning to return to my territory."

“Wha!”

Viscount Romane’s words shocked Earl Aldeheid.

The Viscount is one of his faction members, but his desire to return to his territories will not be easy to deal with, on account of his arrogance and position. As the leader of the lower nobles, he was an aggressive but kind person. Individually, the nobles have anywhere from dozens to hundreds of soldiers, but united they are a formidable force. For this reason, the Earl ignored the Viscount's behavior. However, he can’t just ignore his declaration.

The Earl raised his voice with as much dignity as possible.

“Don't be foolish! Do you intend to betray Duke Gerhardt?!”

It was too late for him to say that since the group under Earl Aldeheid had already switched sides from Duke Gerhardt to General Hodram.

However, the biggest army still belongs to Duke Gerhardt.

Although he has no real power, the Duke still is the flag of their faction.

But the viscount only twisted his lips lightly and sneered at him.

“What are you saying now? Aren't you the one who betrayed him just the other day? Although you're already old, I don't think you're at the age where you forget things easily.”

The Earl’s adjutant who heard this moved his hand to the hilt of his sword.

“Stop!”

The Earl immediately stopped his adjutant.

Then the Earl turned around facing the Viscount as if giving up.

“Indeed, I have no excuse to say that... Fine, let's get right to the point... Why?”

He was asking why the Viscount wanted to return to his territory.

Although the Earl had anticipated the reason, he just wanted to confirm.

And based on the answer, he would then plan out his own future.

“You should know the reason already, no? About those rumors...”

The Viscount said with an irritated expression.

“As expected... That was the reason huh? Is that rumor really true?”

The Viscount shook his head indicating that he did not know.

“Did you all decide to withdraw without confirming the truth first? All of you?”

“The authenticity of that rumor is irrelevant, Earl-dono.”

The one who said that was a young noble standing behind the Viscount.

Earl Aldeheid was unable to remember his name.

It was probably one of the lower-ranked nobles belonging to Viscount Romane.

“What do you mean?”

“The rumor has spread among the peasants. As a result, a lot of them asked us to return home.”

The ones with the most at risk if their territory got burned was the peasants.

All of their property would be gone, and their houses would turn into ash.

The nobles might receive help from their relatives, but peasants could only protect their family by themselves.

They would hardly be able to take care of another person if something were to go wrong.

That is why they want to return home, to protect their modest wealth and the lives of their family.

“Foolish! Just make one or two people among the peasants into examples by punishing them, then this will all be taken care of, right?”

The Earl was stating the nobility’s usual method of taking care of these sorts of problems, and it was a very effective method.

Normally.

“About that... The peasants seem to have prepared to revolt against us if we don't let them go back home...”

“What?! The peasants what?!”

That was quite a considerable surprise for the Earl.

He never expected that the peasants had been cornered that far.

“Indeed. I managed to calm them down for now, but after investigation, similar incidents happened in almost all of the other camps...”

“So what's going on? Did you find something?”

The Earl did not want to hear about it anymore.

He didn’t want to listen to more bad news.

“Marquis Schwarzen has already withdrawn together with his army.”

“Can't be... To decide that so arbitrarily!”

Nobles also have factions among themselves.

Within the nobles faction, Marquis Schwarzen is number 3.

Although in terms of Duke Gerhardt’s trust, Earl Aldeheid won because of his rank in the faction, but going by the size of territory and influence, then Marquis is second only to the Duke.

Even in the formation of this army as well, the Marquis’ soldiers are second in number to the Duke only.

The Earl can't disregard it easily if such an important person had withdrawn from the front lines without saying anything.

“Have you reported this to General Hodram?!”

That was the question the Earl wanted to ask the most.

However, the young nobleman only shook his head while showing a nasty smile.

“At this hour, what result are we going to get by reporting to that person? Marquis Schwarzen also told me that if we disturb his movements, he won't hesitate to battle it out. If that is the case, we have no other way anymore... We should start thinking about our family's survival rather than reporting to General Hodram, don't you agree?”

“Did you want to sacrifice General Hodram? Are the others also of the same opinion?”

They were silent when the Earl asked this.

In other words, they agree to it.

The Earl felt sick to the stomach by their indifference.

However, he also felt that he could understand their attitude, even if it was disgusting.

It might be because of the noble's survival instincts that were ingrained into them since childhood that lead to such an attitude.

“Fuuuh... Fine... If you all have prepared for this much, I have no more words to say... Let's follow your opinion.”

“Then, let us all withdraw immediately. Whether the rumor is true or not, we must defend our territory!”

Receiving Earl Aldeheid words, Viscount Romane immediately left the tent.

While looking at his son, Earl Aldeheid muttered.

“I betrayed Duke Gerhardt and then immediately sacrificed General Hodram huh... That is not a beautiful thing to smear our family name with...”

All of his aides and his son remained silent.

They all realized how harsh the life of nobles is.

Chapter 35

Decisive Battle ⑦

Day 180 after being summoned to another world.

“Your Highness! The instruction to march!”

Meltina urged Princess Lupis to stand in front of all the troops.

According to Ryouma's plan, all the noble's stationed troops around Irachion should have returned to their respective territories.

Since Gerhardt had switched sides, all that remained was the 2,500 knights commanded by Hodram. In contrast, Princess Lupis currently has 25,000 soldiers under her banner.

The situation where princess Lupis was inferior and being overwhelmed had now been reversed, the knights who stood awaiting the Princess's command had impatient gazes. Their morale was at an all time high, after all, they numbered more than ten times the enemy's size.

However, contrary to the Knights high spirits, princess Lupis's heart is filled with bitter feelings. Despite the situation she was in she was unable to dance in joy or feel happy. The fear of a certain man had budded in her heart.

(This is that man's power... The man who could turn the tides of war for such an inferior person... I'm scared of that man... Mikoshiba Ryouma. I'm afraid of that intelligence, and I'm scared of his lack of leniency, I'm scared of that heart that has no respect toward royalty. That man will leave this country the moment we finished dealing with Hodram. That is good... After all, that was the promise we've agreed upon at the first time. But... What if he were to join the enemies side? I can't compete against him... Is there even a person who can match against him in this country? What if he were to oppose us, the man who was able to make light of both Hodram and Gerhardt.)

She had realized it since the beginning, no, rather she was convinced of it. Despite beating Hodram, anxiety welled up in her heart.

In the meantime, she tried to suppress her feelings of uneasiness.

(No, I should think about this later. What's important right now is to ensure Hodram's defeat)

Nodding lightly toward Meltina, Princess Lupis begin to face forward.

"Everyone! Advance!"

She raised her sword and pointed it toward Irachion.

Right now all that mattered is to finally defeat Hodram.

(Everything... Everything I've done is for the sake of winning this war!)

""OOOOOOH!!!""

The cheers echoed once again, and the Knights began advancing all at once.

Their aim is to get Hodram Alberg's head.

Only that.

"Ryouma-sama... Is it alright?"

The Knights led by Princess Lupis leave trails of dust behind them while marching towards Irachion. A group of people watched the knights advance from a nearby hill.

"Yes, there's no point for us to participate in the attack on Irachion."

Ryouma answered Laura's question lightly.

Together with these two, there's her sister Sara and approximately 80 members of the mercenary group led by Lione and Bolts.

Although all of them were prepared to go to the battlefield at anytime, Ryouma who is the commander told them that they are not going to move from their current position.

“But young master... If we don't attack Irachion and the war does not end, what are we to do?”

Bolts make such a question that carried the concern of all the present people

“If we don't attack Irachion, the battle won't end? I see... Does everyone share the same opinion?”

Everyone who heard Ryouma's question nodded their head.

Since Hodram did not move his army out of Irachion, there is no other way to end it but to go on the offensive even if Gerhardt had already fallen under the Princess.

Ryouma who understand Bolts concern shows a smile on his face.

“Then here's a question. Currently, there's only the 2.500 Knights led by Hodram at Irachion. Since Duke Gerhardt had pledged allegiance to the Princess, there only exist one enemy, also known as Hodram. Do you understand?”

Following Ryouma's question, everyone nodded their heads.

Due to the rumor Ryouma had spread, the nobles quickly returned to their own territories as a result, a large number of soldiers had left the outskirts of Irachion. This is another reason why Princess Lupis decided to take the initiative

Only Hodram and his subordinates were all that remained as Princess Lupis's enemies.

All the people present understand that well enough.

“What about princess's military force?”

“Around 25,000 soldiers.”

“Sara is right, then now, how many troops does Hodram has?”

“2,500!”

Bolt quickly shouted.

“That is correct, the difference is more than ten times, hasn’t anyone wondered why Hodram chose to seclude himself within the city walls?”

Ryouma's gaze turns toward the distance.

Everyone tried to guess what Ryouma's words mean.

“Do you think that the General himself is not inside the city?”

Lione tried to confirm the thing she had thought.

“Yes. But well, that probability is around 50-50 I guess? As far as I know, Hodram is an arrogant and indifferent man, but at the same time I think that he's a strong man who knows that giving up is a bad thing.”

“He's not going to give up?”

“At first I thought that he would confine himself within the city since there would be no reinforcement for him. After all, the nobles are not going to help Hodram after returning back toward their own territory. With that being the case, Hodram only has two option left, an honorable death or escape... But I do not think that Hodram is going to choose honorable death.”

“Then doesn’t that mean he's going to escape? But still, can he even pull it off with such a large difference in power?”

Lione's reply toward Ryouma was skeptical.

Lione who has experienced many battlefields is fully aware of the difficulty when withdrawing from the battlefield.

It is simple to make an army advance forward but it becomes difficult when an army has to withdraw at a moments notice.

Furthermore, despite the fact that the Knights are good as individual soldiers, they

lack cooperation and teamwork as a group, so if a sudden order to withdraw were to occur, they would need proper cooperation to avoid chaos during retreats.

Conversely, if the soldiers are just thinking of escaping by themselves without cooperating with the others, the prospect of them being dead is high.

History has proven this to be true.

Since the knights lack the ability to work together, the probability of Hodram would be closest to zero.

“Indeed, that might be true. Well, to do that he would need to prepare a lot of things... Furthermore, we are only considering the scenario where he would try to escape with his knights, the worst possible situation would be if Hodram were to escape whilst abandoning his subordinates, only bring his close aides and family members.”

Lione nodded in agreement after hearing Ryouma's words.

Even if it was possible, Ryouma felt the possibility of Hodram retreating while leading the army to be very low.

“It can't be... To abandon his people...”

“Young master! No matter how bad a person he is, I don't think he would do that...”

Everyone was at a loss for words.

He may be able to escape if he abandons his subordinates and escapes alone.

However, doing that means Hodram would need to give up the Knights who believed in him and chose him to be their general.

Even for Lione and Bolts, they would not do something so shameless despite being mercenaries and some armies employ peasants and mercenaries to act as meat shields and for Hodram as a commander of an army to abandon his own trusted knights, no one seems to believe he would do such a thing...

“Well~, that was just a possibility... To ascertain that, there's no choice other than for us to attack Irachion. I decide for us to not participate in the attack is because I don't

think it would make much difference. That's why I asked the princess to let us do another task..."

Although Ryouma was not 100% sure of the outcome, the odds of it occurring were quite high based on the fact that Ryouma said there was a 50/50 chance of it happening.

Certainly, the Princess is in a very advantageous position, even without Ryouma participating in the battle, it will not affect her chances of obtaining victory.

But if he were to take into account of postwar rewards, deciding not to participate in the assault might not be too profitable from a reward standpoint.

But even with that in mind, Ryouma still decided to stay back on the basis that Hodram might escape.

"Still doubting my decision?"

Everyone shakes their head in response. Having explained up to this point, everyone felt convinced with his reasoning.

"Now then... We have to wait for Genou to come back I guess?"

"Genou is it?"

Toward Ryouma's words, Laura scanned their surroundings.

Certainly, the two people, Genou and Sakuya are not present.

"Don't worry... I just ask them to go to Irachion for some errand... Spreading rumor and other stuff... Oh speak of the devil, how was the situation? Genou, Sakuya..."

Mercenaries disguised as merchants have been spread around Irachion to perform espionage duties.

Their primary duty is to spread the rumor of the person called Mikoshiba Ryouma to the peasants, while some were given the mission to sneak into Irachion to investigate the enemy's movements.

Now that Gerhardt has changed his allegiance, they can place full effort in monitoring Hodram with Genou and Sakuya acting as liaisons...

Ryouma's gaze is directed towards the two people who just got arrived from Irachion.

"Thank you for waiting. Mikoshiba-dono."

"I'm sorry for being late."

The two people apologize toward Ryouma while bowing their head lightly then they begin to give their report.

"Mikoshiba-dono hunch is right on the mark... According to those who kept surveillance on Hodram's mansion, they spotted a number of merchants being summoned yesterday to hurriedly conduct business negotiations..."

"Business negotiations huh... Do you know the contents of the negotiation?"

Genou nodded his head in response towards Ryouma's question.

Ryouma had predicted such a report would come, but he couldn't decide the course of actions without a more detailed understanding of the situations. Thus he asked the two to investigate.

"Yes, when we asked some of the merchants who came out from the mansion, I heard that the people from the mansion want to sell some clothes and other furniture."

Ryouma nodded his head while listening to Genou's words.

It seems like Hodram wants to escape aboard. Thus he wants to sell all of his assets.

"Well now, he appears to be trying to raise some funds to escape..."

"Also, they seem to have stocked up on preserved food."

"Preserved food... I guess he's going to abandon his subordinates after all..."

Hodram would not need to prepare preserved foods if he were planning on bringing

his subordinates with him, since there is a unit in the army that handles supplies.

Furthermore, to call upon the merchants personally, it proves that he is hiding it from his subordinates.

“Yes, the probability is high.”

Genou nodded in agreement.

“How about the escape route? Have you been able to predict it?”

“No, as expected, I haven’t spotted anything so far. But...”

“What's wrong? Did you catch something interesting?”

“It would be quite hard to escape while bringing his family together. With all the baggage, there's no other choice other than to pass via the highway.”

“Ryouma-sama! This.....”

Sara quickly spread the map in front of Ryouma.

“With Irachion... We have four possibilities.”

Ryouma noted that there are seven highways connected to Irachion, three of which are being blocked by Princess Lupis’s army, he might be able to cross it if he were to circle around the army but it would be too dangerous if he were to bring his family with him. Ryouma narrowed the options down considering Hodram’s reputation within the kingdom.

“Southeast, South, Southwest, West, there are four possibilities... Since he will be going with his family, I guess we can exclude the west since it would lead toward the Zalda Kingdom.”

Ryouma nodded his head in agreement toward Laura's words.

(Certainly, the Zalda Kingdom who is known as Iron country has many steep mountains

road. It is a terrain that is too severe to go with family.)

“We can exclude the southwest for the same reason... Thus, what left are southeast and south...”

Both southeast and south are directed toward the southern region. That place is the biggest fierce war zone in the western continent where small countries jumbled up close together.

However, it is also a perfect place to hide.

“These two choices huh..... Now then which one...”

Ryouma then looked up toward the sky.

He has 100 troops on hand.

Every single one of them has very high competence as warriors, but Ryouma also knows that his opponents would resist desperately, so he had no other choice but to recognize their battle powers to be equal. All that was left was to predict the number of troops he would bring with him. It couldn't be too many since if he were to bring too many, it would be less inconspicuous. Ryouma's estimated that Hodram would have around 50 knights with him as his escort.

(It is a foolish idea to divide my troops... But I can't let them escape either... What should I do, I wonder?)

For the future of Rozeria Kingdom, Hodram must die.

And there's also his promise toward Elena.

Various idea appears within Ryouma's mind, but he immediately discards them. No matter how good Ryouma was with thinking up of strategies, there was always a limit to it. He couldn't figure out a solution to supplement the shortage of troops pursuing Hodram.

“Ryouma-sama.”

“What's the matter?”



Sara whispered into Ryouma's ear who is absorbed in his own train of thought.

“Just now, a report was made that some military units passed this area...”

“Is it the enemy?”

Sara shook her head toward Ryouma's question.

“No, it is Elena-sama.”

“Elena-san? She should be participating in the attack with Princess Lupis... Are you sure?”

“Yes, they will arrive here soon.”

“Understood. Please lead me to her.”

Sara nodded at Ryouma's words, and they both left the place.

Chapter 36

Decisive Battle ⑧

Day 180 after being summoned to another world.

“Fuuh, thank goodness, I made it in time!”

With a subtle smile on her face, Elena dismounted from her horse and stood before Ryouma.

However, Ryouma could feel the malice hidden behind that smile...

“Elena-san... Shouldn’t you be leading the attack on Irachion?”

“Oh? It looks like you aren’t part of the force yourself either, right? Well...”

Hearing her words, Ryouma couldn’t help showing a bitter smile.

(As expected, even though she is known as the hero who saved the country back in the days... Despite being old, once she's angry she could still show this kind of expression, huh... She wouldn’t stop at anything until she could kill ‘that person’ by her own hands...)

Ryouma immediately understood her intentions for coming here as soon as he saw the expression on her face.

Just like Ryouma, she also predicted that Hodram will attempt to flee.

Her grudge with Holdram has to be settled sooner than later.

“How many soldiers did you bring?”

“300 of my most trusted men.”

(No room for mercy, huh. But then again, I suppose, it can't be helped...)

Within Elena's heart, revenge has become her reason for living.

The total number of soldiers under her direct control is around 300.

Judging by how she brought almost everyone of her close associates, it was clear as day that she has no intention of stopping until Holdram is dead and gone.

Even if Holdram chooses to surrender, she would most definitely execute him regardless.

“So, how's the situation? Has Holdram made his escape?”

Ryouma shook his head.

“Is that so? Regardless, there is no way he chose honorable death in Irachion, right?”

The color of anxiety crossed Elena's face.

This possibility was outside of her expectation.

However, she's not so naive to think that her expectation is always right.

However, she can't afford any mistake this time.

Because her grudge will never be settled if Holdram died that way.

“I doubt he would do something like that. Plus, I've heard that he has been securing a large amount of escape funds...”

“...As expected... What else should I have expected of that despicable man.”

Elena said those words as if she was spitting on Holdram.

“Do you know where he's heading?”

Ryouma received a map from Sara and spread it in front of Elena.

“We have narrowed it down to two possibilities... The first is, assuming he uses a

horse-drawn carriages to escape and considering that Hodram's family can't go around the dangerous terrain, I think he will flee toward the south."

Ryouma's traced his index finger around the map.

"I see... Indeed it would be difficult for him to head east. If he were to go that way, he would be caught by the nobles who want to butter up the princess..."

Ryouma nodded his head.

Since Princess Lupis is about to win,

The nobles who were hostile at the beginning will attempt to curry favor with the princess to save themselves.

It would be a suicidal act if Hodram chose east.

Everyone would want to take Holdram's head to please the princess.

"West would also be impossible... The terrains toward Zalda's kingdom are full of mountains... Which left South as the only other option,huh?"

Elena's analysis was similar to what Ryouma has in his mind.

In fact, her expression shows that she is quite sure about it.

Ryouma couldn't help but wonder if there's a reason behind that.

"Ryouma-kun, you seem worried about which way he is going huh?"

Ryouma nodded his head silently.

"Do not worry. Hodram's escape route is down south. I'm sure he won't choose the other one."

Elena said those words with confidence.

"What makes you think that way?"

“Because his wife is a noble of the Thalluja Kingdom.”

The Thalluja Kingdom.

A country located roughly 100 Km south of Irachion.

Certainly, if his wife is from that country, then it would be a safer choice as an escape destination.

Since his family has such connection, there is a good chance that they would be happy to shelter him.

“I see... Indeed, it would make sense if he chose to escape to the Thalluja Kingdom when he has such connection, but wouldn't he know that we are aware of this fact?”

Ryouma is by no means trying to find faults with the plan itself.

Elena's theory is already quite convincing.

However, based on his experience from escaping from the Ortomea Empire, the most ideal solution may not always work out best.

This is because the most ideal option is the easiest to predict.

Hence, a good strategist would usually go with the second best option instead.

“Not choosing the best option on purpose, huh? Worry not. I don't think that will be the case... After all, if he were to go southeast, he would reach the Britannia Kingdom”

Elena's finger pointed to the territory next to the Thalluja Kingdom.

“It looks like the distance between here and the two places are about the same. Is there a reason preventing him from choosing the Kingdom of Britannia?”

Elena shook her head in response to Ryouma's question.

“That is not the case... Truth is, Thalluja and Britannia Kingdoms are long-standing nemesis... If Hodram intends to escape, he won't be able to flee to Britannia with his wife who is from the Thalluja Kingdom. Furthermore, Hodram can't just leave his wife

either. After all, if he does that, he would lose all of the backings that he has..."

"Does Elena-san think that Hodram will try to make a comeback by borrowing the power of Thalluja Kingdom? Will he keep looking to reinforce his power?"

"Absolutely. He's not the kind of man who would back off without a fight."

If what Elena has said is correct, then Hodram would definitely escape to the Thalluja Kingdom.

For Hodram, a country where his wife has some degree of influence is much preferable to one that he has no connection with whatsoever...

However, Ryouma has a new concern after he heard Elena's explanation.

He previously did not have any concern towards Holdram's wife, since she was not an important factor.

However, Elena's revenge is not just Hodram's life alone.

She wants to get rid his entire family.

Naturally, that also includes Hodram's wife.

By killing Holdram's wife, it could create an international dispute between Rozaria and Thalluja kingdom, resulting in a new hostile relationship...

(Elena-san knows Hodram well... Right now I should just follow her judgment... Although I was a little bit worried since Hodram's wife is a former noblewoman from another country... Is it really alright to kill her just like that?)

However, Ryouma immediately shook off such concern...

"I understood. I will follow your lead then..."

He intended to make Elena's revenge a top priority.

Elena nodded her head.

"So, what's the plan? Shall we attack them immediately after they left Irachion, or should we wait until they are a little further away?"

“I vote to kill him immediately here... What do you think?”

Elena moved her finger to a nearby spot on the map as she answered Ryouma.

According to the map, the place she had pointed to are mostly covered by forest.

It is a good place for setting up an ambush.

“I see... In that case, we should split our units into two... Let's see, how about I take 200 troops with me and chase them from the back? Will that be alright with you, Elena-san?”

Ryouma knew exactly what Elena wants, and his suggestions clearly reflect it.

And Elena understood Ryouma's intention.

“Thank you, Ryouma-kun.”

Those words represent all of her heart.

And also the fate of Hodram and his entire family.



“Kyle, Is there anyone on our tails?”

Kyle glanced back one more time before answering.

“We are safe for now, your Excellency...”

“I see... It seems it was a good call to listen to your advice, escaping at the same time when Princess Lupis began to close in...”

“Sir! Thank you for your kind words!”

Kyle deeply lowered his head.

After Hodram had cashed in on all his assets, he gathered a few of his aides in his

mansion and waited for the right timing.

They all waited for an opportunity to escape Irachion.

And the time is today.

The time when Princess Lupis begins her assault on Irachion.

Huge panic broke out in Irachion.

While Holdram is well aware that Gerhardt had changed his allegiance to side with Princess Lupis, this information has yet to be known to the public.

As a result, the residents thought that the princess is marching her army to purge the duke.

Regardless of what the ruling class did, it has nothing to do with the citizen.

However, if the city is under attack by a large army, the citizen will, without a doubt, suffer damage.

With the city being under dire situation, the citizens attempt to escape the city to protect their wealth and lives.

And Hodram took full advantage of the window created by the confusion to escape.

“Fuuuh! I never thought that it would go this smoothly! I will reward you later, Kyle. Curse you, Lupis and Gerhardt... I swear I will make you pay for what you’ve done!”

Feeling relieved that no pursuers are after them, Hodram began to curse his enemies.

His words had no trace of respect whatsoever.

Usually, it is extremely disrespectful to address a royal family member by their name without any honorifics.

However, he had already given up his position within the Rozeria Kingdom.

Prestige, knighthood, and reputation.

Hodram has thrown away all of his status as ruling class within the Rozeria Kingdom.

However, even with all of the things that happened to him, there's no justification to his grudge.

The princess was not the cause that costed him his status.

If anything, it was him who betrayed the princess first, and then tricked by Gerhardt.

Karma came back to bite him hard.

But he could not accept the reality.

All of his hardship was caused by others and none of it was his fault.

And because being that kind of man, he is even willing to abandon everything and flee to another country.

“How are my wife and daughter doing? Is there any problem?”

Hodram turned his eyes to the carriage behind him.

Inside, his family members are on board.

“Yes, sir! We're doing our best to ensure they are comfortable in the carriage.”

“Hmph. They are my last trump card! Listen to me! I will not tolerate any mistake, you hear?!”

“Please rest assured. We will surely take them to Thalluja safely! Isn't that right, men?!”

“““Yes, sir! Please leave it to us!”“““

The surrounding knights voiced their agreement in unison.

Hodram's trump card can also be regarded as everyone's trump card.

Just like Hodram, everyone who is present here are people who cannot live within the Rozeria Kingdom anymore.

They are the people who have benefitted from Hodram's influence in the past.

That is why they did not betray Hodram.

If Hodram became influential, then so would they. And vice versa.

It was not a loyalty relationship, but rather a mutual benefit and survival.

“Good! If the prince of Thalluja Kingdom marries my daughter, then I will gain power despite being a foreigner! When that happens, I shall reward you all accordingly!”

“““Yes, sir!”“““

Hodram’s last trump cards are his wife and his daughter who are nobles within the Thalluja Kingdom.

He wants to set himself up by marrying his daughter to the prince of Thalluja.

This was what Hodram had planned for since the beginning.

After all, he does not have much influence within the Thalluja Kingdom's nobility and the royal family yet.

In order to gain more control, he needs more backings. And there are only a few possible options to do so.

And among them, the prince is the likeliest to provide Holdram the platform he needs to gain power.

His heart has yet to give up.

(I will not let it end like this! I will definitely reclaim my power again with these hands!)

Such aggressive thoughts from a former general, drunk in former power.

The pleasure of being the person in power.

It is similar to that of narcotics, devouring one's heart and mind.

“As if I will let it end like this!”

Holdram’s eyes reflected nothing but darkness.

Chapter 37

Decisive battle ⑨

Day 182 after being summoned to another world.

It was currently in the middle of the day, where the sun stood right above one's head. The highway was free of all traffic, it wasn't clear if it was due to the civil war or other matters but currently only Hodram and his party were passing through the highway.

With him, several carriages and knights who acted as guards, numbering around 200 people.

Immediately, a vast forest appeared in front of their eyes.

"We've finally reached this place... any signs of the enemy?"

Hodram spoke with a tired voice.

"No pursuers are showing up yet... I think we should not be worried about that anymore... After we go pass this forest, it would only take a one day ride toward Thalluja Kingdom's border."

After Kyle said those words, a smile appears on Hodram's face.

"Just a little bit more huh..."

Hodram anxiously looked toward the carriages behind him.

Kyle's gaze also follows him.

"Both of them are really patient..."

Hodram responded toward Kyle's words with a big sigh.

“Umu... They’ve been waiting patiently I..... But it seems like this is their limits. They have not yet eaten food, and they also didn't want to drink water. My wife and daughter seem to have felt a slight bit of nausea... I guess, this is the limit of their physical abilities...”

Three days have passed since their escape from Irachion.

The shaking of the carriage due to the high speed it is travelling with caused Hodram’s wife and daughter to feel sick.

Well, this is not a sightseeing trip after all.

The circumstance to live as a fugitive was giving the sheltered ladies a large amount of pressure and the reason they have yet to complain despite being sick is because they had already understood that they’re lives were on the line.

“Kyle..... Today, if we find a good place for camping, what do you think if we took an early rest?”

Hodram wore the expression not of a ruler but of a worried father and husband. Although the day was still early he wanted them to take a rest, knowing that his wife and daughter were already at their limits.

If they were to die on their journey then it would only be troublesome for Hodram, his wife acted as an intermediary between Hodram and Thalluja Kingdom’s nobles and his daughter is to enter a political marriage with one of the royal family members.

This was the true nature of humans.

“I think that is a good judgment... your Excellency's wife and daughter physical strength seem to have reached the limit... After entering the forest, we will see if we can find a good camping spot.”

Kyle also seems to fully understand that Hodram's wife and daughter had reached the limits of their physical strength.

Thalluja’s border was only one day away.

Furthermore, after escaping from Irachion, they had never seen any pursuers.

(It will be alright... We successfully escaped... Perhaps they had directed the pursuers to an entirely different direction. Now, what's important are the madam and young lady condition... Because our lives depend on them...)

Carelessness and Selfishness.

That is the two thing that determined their fate.



The night was illuminated by the moon's gentle light. The bonfire needed to be kept to a minimum size as to not be spotted but thanks to the moonlight, one wouldn't require to expand the fire.

"Our luck is really bad..."

"Indeed... To end up as a watchman for today..."

The two knights turned their eyes toward the dark forest around their vicinity. Both knights stood donning their armor and armed with spears. Although both looked the same age, the knight on the right was a slight bit taller than the one on the left.

Tonight was a memorable night since Hodram had finally permitted the knights to take off their armor after the three long day ride but these two unlucky knights continued to wear theirs since they were assigned to the night watch.

Since they were professional soldiers, they were still able to take on the role despite the long journey however they were still human beings, so being unable to take any rest had caused them to be weakened.

"But tomorrow, we will finally arrive at the border. Once we cross the border, we can relax..."

The tall knight muttered those words.

"Indeed... We've gone this far..."

Responding to the tall knight, the other knight muttered those words in a small voice.

“Still... To cast away Rozeria is a bit...”

The tall knight sighed greatly.

He belonged to a prestigious knight's household and all his family members had pledged their allegiance to the Rozaria kingdom as knights but it all ended at the last predecessor of the family. He himself held no loyalty towards the royal family, that is why he followed Hodram who had provided for him, women, gold and position within the knight's order.

Even without pledging his loyalty, Hodram continued to give him the things he desired.

However, everything has fallen apart.

Princess Lupis whom was previously Hodram's puppet and the nobles who worked with him, was able to break away from him and betray him.

Now they all end up without a place to live within the Kingdom of Rozeria.

With such a situation, they only have two paths left for them.

Either wander around the continent until the day he finds a new lord, or keep following Hodram and bet on his comeback.

Despite thinking that, until a few month ago they all were at the height of their life.

Now, all of them are being chased out from their own country.

Thus he lamented his current situation.

“Don't say that!”

The other knight replied with a stern low voice.

“But you know...”

The tall knight keeps on talking.

“Shut up! I know what you've been thinking! I know that but, leave it at that...”

The other knight also seems to feel the same as the tall knight.

The short knight feels angry for the same reason as the tall knight...

“My bad... Sorry.”

The tall knight understood that and immediately apologize.

“Anyway! We just have to concentrate as a guard for now! Tomorrow we can finally cross the border towards Thalluja Kingdom—...”

From within the forest, something cuts the air.

And the words of the short knight stops halfway.

“What's wrong?”

The tall knight turns to his comrade who stood beside him and although he stood perfectly still he noticed the eyes of his comrade were different.

(?? What is going on?)

*Hyu... *

While he was thinking what was going on, his thought process ceased.---

Another arrow was released from within the forest once again.

Within Sakuya's vision, she can see knights figure standing some distances away from where she stood.

She held her breath and pulled the bow to the limit to deliver the finishing blow.

The arrow that was attached to the bow was dyed black.

That is why it would be impossible for the knights to dodge them in the middle of the night like this.

Such concealable weapons were handed down within their clan. Knowing the line of work that their clan dwells in, many of her techniques worked well at night.

“Ryouma-sama... I've killed them...”

“Alright... We should begin moving...”

Toward Sakuya's report, Ryouma sends a small hand signal toward Sara who has been on standby behind him.

“Well then... We shall proceed according to the plan...”

Following Ryouma's signal, Sara tells the mercenaries to move forward with the plan in a small voice.

“Alright... Listen up, Our role right now is the same as hunting dogs... Bark as loud as possible when you see the enemy.”

Sara nodded her head in responding to Ryouma's words, then Ryouma move towards the enemy encampment.

Behind him, ten mercenaries followed.

Another unit led by Laura and Genou are also around, and they might begin to move after they finished their preparation.

“Young master! The preparation are finished!”

One mercenary comes close to Ryouma to give his report.

“Alright! Begin!”

Ryouma then immediately gives the order to the surrounding mercenaries.

Several mercenaries quickly disappeared into the dark.

Within a few minutes, a red light begins to appear within the camping ground.

At first, it was a small red light inside the darkness, but as time goes, the light illuminates began to illuminate the whole camp.

“Fire! Fire~~~!!!”

“No! The enemy! It's an enemy raid!”

A scream begins to resound from the camping ground located near the highway.

Along with the scream, sounds of metal clashing against each other can be heard.

“What?! The enemy?!”

Hodram immediately raised his sleeping body.

“Who?! What the hell is going on?”

Brushed the blanked away, Hodram then reached out his hand toward his favorite sword leaned on his bed side.

“Dear? What's wrong?”

His wife who had fallen asleep next to him woke up.

“Father...”

He also heard the worried voice of his daughter who slept a little bit away from the two.

They both seem to have woken up due to the screams of the watchman.

“It's alright... I will do something about it. Both of you have nothing to worry about.”

Hodram calmly told the two of them who were trembling in fear.

“Your Excellency!”

One of his knight voice came from outside of the tent.

“Umu! What's wrong? I heard there are fires and an enemy raid?”

He asked the knight from inside the tent.

“Yes! I'm very sorry to disturb. Currently, Kyle-dono has been leading the defensive battle. Your excellency should immediately prepare to depart...”

Hodram's complexion changes due to the knight's words.

“Understood! Did you hear? We will leave here immediately!”

Hodram did not hesitate even for a moment.

If he were to hesitate in deciding something, then he wouldn't have been able to become a General of the Rozeria Kingdom.

Hodram expression has already changed into an expression of a warrior who has gone through numerous battlefields.

“Dear, we're already ready.”

When he looked back, his wife and daughter already been dressed, understanding the situation they judged it best to quickly prepare for departure.

“Umu! We're going!”

Hodram takes his wife and child towards the carriages while being guarded by the Knights.

“Your Excellency! Is everything alright?!”

“Kyle! What's going on?!”

At the time when Hodram gets his wife and children into the carriages, Kyle comes while running.

Kyle who appears in front of Hodram donned his armor with his sword in hand...

Looking at Kyle's appearance Hodram face relaxed a little bit.

Because Kyle who looks calm without getting nervous looks reliable.

“Kyle! What's the situation? Is it pursuers sent out by Lupis?!”

Hodram quickly asks Kyle his question.

“Because there's no banner, it is unknown whether it was Princess Lupis army or not... But 20 knights are currently engaging the enemies. The fire was started by them as well!”

Kyle delivered his report.

The guards were assuming the attackers belonged to Princess Lupis's army but due to the darkness and the fact the attackers had no banners made it impossible for them to affirm who their enemies were.

Other than pursuers, the only possibility is bandits.

Should they fight back, or should they run away... They seem to contemplate which decision to take.

“I see... How about the defense against the enemy?”

Hodram throws another question toward Kyle.

“I'm doubtful that we can take them on like this... Your Excellency, I suggest you to get your wife and daughter and immediately leave this place...”

Kyle urged Hodram to move by opening the door of the carriage immediately.

“Now then your Excellency. We should immediately leave this place!”

Hodram quickly nodded his head toward Kyle's words.

“Umu! I will ask the detail later! Kyle! We're going to go toward Thalluja capital city immediately!”

Saying that Hodram quickly entered the carriage. He entrusted everything to Kyle. Since there was nothing to be done by staying here.

Hodram must survive this ordeal since if he continued to live, he could reward his subordinates. He may have been arrogant but he wasn't foolish enough to think that his power could solve everything.

“Now then! You! Start moving the carriage!”

Seeing Hodram already board the carriage, Kyle immediately shouts toward the Knight who held the reins.

“Ha!”

The Knight lashed his whip and struck the horse to move.

The horse-drawn carriages rush onto the highway whilst accelerating. Surrounding it were around 30 knights commanded by Kyle. The low number was taking into consideration the knights who managed to wear their armors and follow Hodram. Although many knights had taken their armors off to rest, some chose to continue wearing it during the break.

“Your Excellency... Are you alright?!”

Kyle muttered such words while looking around.

Along the way, some knights jumped out with only their clothes clung to their bodies.

They have spears and swords on their hands, but those who had taken off their armor were not good as war potential.

It would be good if the enemies were only amateurs but since the enemy was able to mount a night assault so swiftly, made Kyle understand that the opposition is experienced in war.

Everyone present were awaiting Kyle's next orders.

They all understood.

To survive this, they have to follow Kyle's order to the letter.

“Listen! Those who are not wearing armor! You should withdraw slowly! Position your spear towards the enemy! Do not engage the enemy in close quarter combat! Understood?!”

Toward Kyle's words, all the knights nod in silence and begin to set up their spears in position.

“Here they come!”

According to Kyle's voice, the knights readied their spears.

Chapter 38

Decisive battle ⑩

Day 182 after being summoned to another world.

A smile slowly appeared on Ryouma's face when he spotted Kyle gathering the remaining knights.

"Ho ho~... Not bad, to put such defensive posture so quickly despite receiving a surprise attack like that."

"What should we do, boy? Should we push them? If we don't prepare to make sacrifices here we won't be able to break through, y'know?"

Kyle's formation is simple.

Even if the knights had learnt magic, they are people who emphasize individual capabilities thus never learning how to properly cooperate and setting up complex battle formations.

That is why Kyle can only order them to stand in a defensive line and be done with it.

However, even with just that, such formation can be formidable if one was able to do it in a short amount of time.

And with such thought in mind, Kyle gives his order.

They arrange their shield in the front row and projecting spears from the gap.

Such formations utilize the shields to prevent damage while the spears are able to attack any enemies who attempt to assault the formation.

It was a good defense formation.

Nonetheless, such formation is only a formation that is hard to break.

Just like what Lione said, if Ryouma were prepared to make some sacrifice then

Ryouma can win this battles with brute force.

“No... We can finish this with one blow! Contact Laura who is waiting at the back and on standby! Tell her to carry out a pincer maneuver, if she attacks the rear while we attack the front, the formation will easily be broken. Draw the enemies attention so that Laura can encircle the enemy from behind.”

Ryouma proposed the plan to intercept the enemy by making Laura and her units move behind Kyle.

Ryouma's intention is to annihilated Kyle. He has no intention to be merciful to Hodram and his men since for Rozeria Kingdom they were worthless things to keep alive. Rather they could provide to be a more dangerous factor in the future.

“Understood! Attracting the enemy's attention here huh... Then is it better for us to hit them using arrows?”

Bolts nod his head in agreement with what Lione had said.

“To start with we can use a lightning magic attack! Listen alright; we will attack them in a flashy way to attract their attention, nothing more!!”

Following Lione's command, the mercenaries turn their palms toward the enemy.

““O spirit that governs over thunder. With my blood as the compensation, please lend me thy power! In accordance to the pact, take down the enemies in front of me!”“

After they chant together, a small ball wrapped in thunder appeared in their hands. It gradually increases in volume.

“Do it!”

“““Lightning bolt bullet!”““

Lightning balls are released at the same time from their hands and attacked the knights.

The lightning balls begin to change into a gigantic lightning ball while absorbing each

other.

“All member defensive posture!”

In response to Kyle's voice, the Knights hold their shield down touching the ground, and put power into their arms.

crack crack!

A sound of high-pitched electric discharge echoes.

The gigantic lightning ball exploded after touching their shields creating raging thunders around them.

“Listen up! The shield had been given anti magic art! Do not let go of it, no matter what!”

Kyle's vision is dyed white due to the light caused by the electric discharges.

If the Knights were to let go their shield even for a moment, the lightning balls would strike them straight on.

Everyone waited patiently for the lightning ball assault to end.

However, because of them focusing on defending against the attack from the lightning balls, they neglected their rear defence, not knowing that Ryouma had accounted for that.

“Second row! Start chanting!”

Again under Lione's direction, numerous mercenaries who waited in the second row come forward and start chanting.

““O wind spirit. respond to my request, like a ragging storm and blow away the enemy!”“

“Release!”

“““Charging Wind!”““



A gust of wind appears.

From the palm of their hands. Winds strong enough to blow away even an adult men begin assaulting Kyle.

“Chi! Damn it! Maintain the defensive formation! The enemy's magic art won't reach here! If they continue using magic art like this by the end of the day, they will end up exhausted!”

Kyle was convinced that he would be able to surpass the ordeal.

(Humph! I guess they are just bandits after all... If they were military pursuers, then they wouldn't attack like this... If that is the case, then let the idiots continue attacking like this and get exhausted because of it... Since we have the anti magic shields, we can prevent the attack well enough. Afterward, we just have to wait for those bastards to get exhausted!)

Usually, when it comes to long magic battles, the one who is on the defensive is more advantageous.

Those who are able to use magic art often unconsciously clad their body with prana to prevent a lethal attack from the enemy's magic.

Furthermore, if the defending person knows the enemy is going to attack just like right now, the person can thicken the prana around their body to temporarily protect the body.

In addition to that, the armors worn by the knights usually have magic incorporated on it by using endowment magic art. With all of these, most of the magic art can be rendered harmless, or at least prevent the person from suffering from high damage.

Of course, even defending has its limits since the person in defense also consumes prana to cover their body. But in this regard, the attacking enemy is also in the same position.

However, in terms of prana exhaustion, the attacking side is much more severe.

That is why the people who conduct war in this world usually use their magic art on their body to strengthen their body then bring the battles into close quarter combat.

““““UOoooh!!!”“““

Suddenly voices can be heard from within the forest behind the defending knights.

At the same time with shouting, shadows jump out from within the forest.

“Kill!”

“Don't let anyone escape!”

The men who came out from the forest attacked the back of the knights which was left unprotected.

“Wha! Enemy attack! The enemy is attacking from behind!”

“It can't be!”

“Fools! Don't lose focus! You can just strengthen your defenses against the enemy from the back as well!”

“Don't be unreasonable! We can't change the formation right now!”

“Shut up! Do you want to die?!”

They had received a surprise attack whilst defending against the onslaught of magic performed by the units under Lione.

The soldiers began to think of their next course of actions.

Some considered standing their grounds to continue their defense against the magic arts while some wanted to go on the offensive to deal with the threat that appeared from behind.

There were also those who despite being in such a situation, wanted to await for their new orders from Kyle but in the end even with the number of strategies they thought up, nothing changed. After all they had already made the biggest mistake since the start of the battle, waiting for Ryouma to finish his attack.

“Now! Push forward!”

Following Lione's order, the mercenaries pull the swords out and head towards Kyle.

“Khu! Front row! Don't break your stance!”

Kyle is desperately giving out his order.

The victory and defeat has not yet been decided.

If the Knights follow his command, then the possibility of victory still remains.

However, his words no longer reach anyone's ears.

It was natural for it to end up like that.

After all, having a surprise attack happen behind their back, a considerable training and trust toward their commanders are needed to keep the formation from being broken.

While in this case Kyle and the Knights lacked both of these traits.

A strong attack from behind led by Laura and Lione who advanced from the front gradually broke the formation.

The formation was broken as if it were nothing more than a sand castle being swept by a sea's wave.

“Kyle-dono! This is impossible. Let's withdraw!”

One of the knights shouted toward Kyle.

“That would be impossible! In this situation, there's no way for us to escape!”

Kyle shook his head as if giving up.

There are only 20 people left around him.

Kyle who was being assaulted from his back and front were surrounded and completely isolated.

Those who wanted to escape to the forest.

Those who wanted to stay and keep fighting.

No matter what they chose.

The result would be the same.

And that is Death.

(Damn it! Why?! Why did it ends up like this! For them to attack us using a pincer maneuver! Are they not bandits?! Don't tell me. They are Lupis men?! Damn it!)

Kyle cursed under his breath.

Even if he lamented his fate, nothing would change.

If Kyle were being impatient here, then everything will end for real.

(Khu! 20 people left... Should we run toward the forest? Otherwise, we have to defeat the enemy and break through... Which one should I choose? If I were to die here, everything would end! Even though I was volunteered because I thought I could prevent the attack with our ability!)

It was not out of good faith that Kyle let Hodram goes first.

He let Hodram go first is entirely for his self-interest.

(If I can stop the enemy here, the impression Hodram has toward me would improve. Since Hodram who was on a decline would need a trustworthy subordinate!)

That was what Kyle had in mind.

He was thinking of raising his appeal towards Hodram so that he would receive even better treatment once they reached Thalluja Kingdom, that was the only reason that Kyle allowed Hodram to escape with his family first.

In other words, he assumed a dangerous position to reap the benefits from Hodram, after all, if they were only mere bandits then they would be no match for Kyle.

Even if he suddenly received a surprised attack, he predicted he would be able to

survive and win by making use of their sheer power and equipment.

Of course, if the people who attacked him was Princess Lupis's subordinates, then his calculation would be thrown far off.

(What should I do? What should I do to survive?)

Kyle thinks desperately.

Around them, the sounds of swords clashing against each other gradually become fewer.

Since the mercenaries were able to deal with the knights one by one.

(This is bad! If this continues... there's no other choice... If escaping to the forest is impossible then...)

Kyle directed his eyes forward.

Even if he were to escape, he would just end up being pursued.

He must make the enemy confused in order for him to escape the pursuers.

(That's it! Over there is the enemy's headquarter! There's no other way than break through and attack that place at once!)

Kyle spotted a small group that hasn't moved since the beginning of the battle.

He judged that it must be the enemy's commander.

"Listen! Keep pushing forward! We will attack the enemy's commander!"

"Are we going to break through the enemy?!"

The Knights become noisy.

However, they immediately quiet down.

After all, no one else had thought up of another solution to survive.

"Listen! Only focus on the enemy in front of you! Kill all those who stand before you!"

Kyle only demands one thing from the Knights.

And that is to kill the enemy who stands in the direction where they are advancing towards.

Straightforward and clear orders restore the knight's spirit who was caught in fear.

(That's right! Push and kill!)

(If I want to survive, kill!)

(Kill, Kill and only Kill!)

Within the knight's heart, they only want to kill Ryouma.

““““OOOOoooh!”““““

Their fighting spirit was burned up once again.

“PUUUSH!”

Following Kyle's order, the knights begin to push the mercenaries back.

Just like how a cornered mouse will bite the cat.

Kyle who was driven to the corner due to Ryouma's plan is similar to that of a mouse.

And now, Kyle tried to bet his life on the line by engaging Ryouma head on.

“Khuu! What's going on! Somehow they managed to gain some momentum!”

“Calm down! That was just their last resistance!”

Being pushed by the knights who suddenly gain their momentum, the mercenaries movement was stopped.

“Stupid! What are you doing?!”

“This is bad nee-san! If we stay like this, they will break our front line!”

While wiping some blood stuck on her sword Lione clicked her tongue after hearing Bolts words.

“Enough! I will personally handle the front then!”

Originally, she is a warrior.

Although she can command troops, her real value lies in her competence as a warrior but Bolt couldn't let her go to somewhere so dangerous either.

“You can't nee-san! Did you forget what young master had said?!”

“Stupid! This is not the time for that! If we leave it like this then...”

The goddess of war is smiling at Kyle this time around.

While Lione and Bolts were arguing with each other, Kyle managed to break through.

“Nee-san, it's dangerous!!”

Bolt covered for Lione.

A sword clashed against each other in high speed.

“Khuu! Who are you trying to obstruct me!”

The men voice resounded and he raises his swords fast aimed at Lione.

“You!”

“Are you the leader of this people?! Why did you attack us?! Well whatever, whether you're a bandit or Lupis's follower, there's no difference, die!”

Kyle sword began to move toward Lione's head who was caught off guard.

Clear murderous intent can be felt coming out from him.

“DIE!”

“Damn it! Nee-san!”

“Dodge! Bolts!”

Bolts and Lione were prepared for death.

Hiyu

Suddenly the sounds of wind being cut can be heard.

Clank

“Who?! Who is it?”

Kyle shouted while trying to fix his stance after deflecting a blade flying at him.

Hiyu, Hiyu

Clank, clank

Kyle desperately knocked down the blade that was being aimed at him from somewhere.

“Damn it! Show yourself!”

Around Kyle, the knights who had survived the break through standing surrounding him

Only five of them left.

“Boy...”

What reflected in front of Lione's eyes is Ryouma.

“Are you alright? Lione-san.”

“Y-Yes! You too, where did you come from?!”

“It's fine, let's talk later... Lione-san and Bolts-san should withdraw here and command the remaining units.”

“But!”

“It's fine... This guy is mine.”

Ryouma's eyes shine coldly.

His gaze freezes Kyle and his knights for a moment.

“It's you huh?! You're the one who interfered!”

Ignoring Kyle's words, Ryouma pulls his sword in silent.

“I will personally eliminate you, Kyle Irunia-san.”



Then he performs 'Kage no Kamae', a stance where he hides the end of his word behind his back.

"You bastard! We won't let you touch Kyle-dono!"

The knights around Kyle began standing in front of him tried to protect him.

However, in the next moment, blood splashed out from their neck.

"Do not disturb my lord. Youngsters."

From the shadow, Genou appeared while wiping blood from his sword.

No one realizes how fast his movement was.

Despite the confusing battlefield, there are five knights left.

Yet he was able to kill all of them in a single moment. For his enemy, his movement is equal to that of a god of death.

"W-Wha-What are you!"

Kyle raises his eyebrow in surprise and fear.

"You don't have to mind me. I only want to get rid of the hindrance. Your opponent is my lord over there..."

That was the cold words coming out from the person whom Kyle thought to be a god of death.

Ryouma and Kyle.

The fates between the two will be decided here and now.

Chapter 39

Decisive battle ⑪

Day 182 after being summoned to another world.

There are only two people stand on the battlefield.

The noise of the surrounding gradually disappears, and silence dominates the place.

Mercenaries who previously hunted the knights gradually gathered together and form a circle where Ryouma and Kyle stand in the middle.

“Nee-san... What do you think?”

Toward Lione who is not responding to him at all, Bolts gives up.

Since he was a longtime acquaintance of hers.

He would naturally know what was inside Lione's mind.

Toward Bolts, Lione suddenly speaks without turning her face.

Before her, Kyle and Ryouma confronted each other.

Her eyes were staring at both of them, observing every movement.

“Since the enemies are mostly taken care of, there's no need for us to take command anymore... And then asking us to let him do this battle. It can't be helped if my warriors blood boils, don't you think so?”

Toward Lione's words, Bolts can't help but show a bitter smile.

He also a man who has crossed many battlefields as a warrior.

Although he has begun avoiding melee fighting after he lost his left arm, his warrior soul has not yet rusted.

Just like Lione, Bolts is also an outstanding fighter.

Witnessing something such as two people dueling to the death.

As a warrior they both respect and support such battle.

Everyone present in that place understands that feeling.

Not even one of the mercenaries wants to stab Kyle from the back after seeing the current situation.

Although it might sound embarrassing, some might actually want to do something but don't know what to do.

“Still... I did hear something about Kyle's ability... But to think that he can go this far...”

“Indeed. It would be a suicidal act for you who lost your arm to fight against him..... Even for me, if I were to fight him one-on-one, I think I have no chance...”

Lione regrettably voiced her opinion.

The reason for her for feeling regretful is because she realizes that Kyle's sword art is better than herself.

One of the most important abilities for someone who fights on the battlefield is the capability to judge others ability.

Is the enemy's skill better than my own or not?.

Is the enemy's equipment quality better than mine?

Is the enemy a strong person who can fight well in a rough battlefield?

To survive on the battlefield, the ability to judge for such things is necessary.

<TLN: The famous principles 'know your enemy, know yourself'.>

No matter how strong you are, if the enemy is far stronger than you, then your own power means nothing.

Naturally, Lione and Bolts who have survived through battlefields for many years have such quality in them.

They understood Ryouma and Kyle's ability as they watched them.

“Well it can't be helped then? For nee-san and I, we never learned formal swordsmanship... Our sword is a sword tempered by the battlefield. If it was a battlefield then I think our ability is enough already, you know?”

A mercenaries sword art is a sword art that has been polished in harsh fighting where enemies always surrounded them.

It is not to say such sword art weak.

What that means is that some sword arts are only applicable in a certain situation.

While mercenaries sword art is more specialized to fight on a crowded battlefield, Kyle's sword art is more centered around a duel one-on-one sword style.

Lione lightly nods her head in agreement.

She understands about what Bolts had said.

“The young master also does not seems to lose compared to him... He's not even one step behind of Kyle... Damn, what a vigor! I even feel overpowered by them while standing here...”

Even without them clashing their swords, their competence can be seen.

The air released by them is different.

A cold, sharp, and intimidating air is discharged into the environment by them.

“Does the boy not intend to move?”

“Well, they both tried to see each other... And Kyle also wears an armor and also a small buckler... He cannot move however he like when the enemy has such defense...”

Kyle is wearing his armor along with his helmet, sword in the right hand and a small shield buckler on the left hand.

He's fully equipped as a knight.

On the other hand, Ryouma's weapon is the sword presented by Genou held by both

hands, while his armor is the thing called leather armor.

It was a lightweight armor which has a high mobility, but in term of defense power, it was overwhelmingly inferior compared to what Kyle's wear.

“Kyle has a heavy equipment with him... If I were to confront him as it is, I would try to fight him by shaving his physical strength bit by bit...”

“Indeed, but usually we will strengthen our body with magic in that fight, that's why I think we can't compare it to them...”

“I agree... Although he was wearing such heavy armor, Kyle's agility did not get dampened at all. That's why the boy who can not use magic arts is without a doubt at a disadvantage... Yet, why is that child showing such confidence?”

Toward Lione's words, Bolts has no words to return.

Kyle who uses magic art to strengthen his body. Resulting in his agility not being dampened by the heavy armor.

Having Kyle use such ability while wearing armor with strong defense.

Ryouma is in a disadvantageous situation.

However, Ryouma did not show that he's in trouble at all.

In fact, he looks confident

As if he has nothing to fear.

One can say that he has an absolute confidence.

Or he actually a fool who can't judge the situation.

Clank

Spark scattered between the two.

The two of them move at the same time and crashes their swords.

Clank, clank

Sword rub against another sword in high speed, creating a high pitched sounds.

At first, their strength is equal, but gradually the sword starts to approach Kyle.

After all Ryouma using his sword with both hands, while Kyle only uses one of his hand.

Between both hand and one hand.

It would be obvious that holding the sword with both hands would generate more power.

However, the battle cannot be decided with just that.

Doga

A dull sound can be heard.

Kyle quickly uses his shield and throws his body forward pushing Ryouma back.

After that, both of them jumped back to create a space between them once again.

(Damn it! What's wrong with this guy?... Is he trying to say that he's equal to me? Me? Who is one of the best magic and sword art users within Rozeria kingdom? Furthermore, his weapon... He seems to use a single edged sword... What kind of a sword is that? Is it a weapon specialized in killing?)

While Kyle had such thought, he postured his shield in front of him to harden his defense.

(No wait... Let's calm down first. My opponent only wears a light armor. For having such sword and a light armor... His defense can be said as thin as paper... If I manage to prevent his attack with the shield then push him down at the same time, everything would then be over... I who has a better defense than him without a doubt holds the advantage... There's no need for me to rush, I just have to harden my defense and wait for an opening... I can do this...)

His sword is his family heirloom.

His armor and shield are said to be passed down generation after generation by his ancestors who served the Rozeria Kingdom.

He places more strength in his hand, and fixes his stance.

“Oryaaaaaaa!!

A sudden loud voice comes out from Ryouma, a strong shock struck Kyle's left hand.

The left hand which is holding the shield feels numb and get pushed to the side.

(Damn it, what a blow! My arm went numb... How come his slash is heavier than before?! Like this, I can't move my sword and can only concentrate on defense! Damn it, you monster!)

Ryouma uses all his body weight to swing his sword.

Such slash where he uses all of his muscle power can be said to be a death blow.

The evidence for that can be seen on Kyle's shield, which ends up with a deep mark from the slash.

A shield buckler is made with wood and leather material on the inside, while the surface is covered with thin iron. Such shield had its iron torn off, and the wood part is peeking out from inside.

Ryouma's eyes saw that.

(Did I manage to cut the surface? As expected, it was not made purely out of steel huh?)

Even for Ryouma, it would be impossible to cut a shield made out of pure steel.

However, looking at the damaged steel, Ryouma feel reassured.

If this were Ryouma's previous world, it would be common sense to ditch such damaged shield, but here is another world.

Since there's a magic to strengthen the body, such common sense can't be relied upon.

(Certainly, it was unbelievable for him to move that freely despite wearing such thick armor.)

Ryouma calmly observed his opponent.

Usually, such heavy armors would limit your body movement.

It would be more so if iron is used as the base material.

Yet Ryouma's opponent was still able to match his speed.

The fact that his opponent was able to block most of his attacks is a proof of that.

Indeed the knight would be able to boast as a person who has an overwhelming power in battlefield if they can move with such armor and shield that easily.

(Magic art which can complement one own martial art huh? Not only that it also did not need chanting too... Indeed, such thing is much more annoying than magic art that requires a long chant...)

Such magic art can only be applied toward one's own body, but with the benefits of eliminating the need to chant, having the prana consumption much lower than normal magic, not to mention the effect.

Having such magic art no wonder that this world people called it a trump card in warfare.

Whether or not you're able to use magic art, that would determine between being a human who dominates others or being dominated.

(However... There's no such thing as absolute...)

Ryouma's eyes gaze over Kyle's weakness.

(Kyle... I will kill you bastard here without fail! I will show you! The technique that my grandfather had teach me!)

Cold air wrapped around Ryouma.

[Ryouma Listen... Katana is part of your body. Instead of swinging a sword, think of it as moving your arm... When you take out your katana, never hesitate. Hesitation will only distract your mind and consciousness, such hesitation would then be transmitted to your katana. Focus and don't hesitate! Believe in the technique that I've taught you! And your katana would never be broken...]

In Ryouma's mind, his grandfather's words emerge.

(Focus and don't hesitate... What I have to do is only one thing, and that is to kill my opponent!)

“Kylleeeeeeeeeee!”

Ryouma shouted his opponent name.

At the same time, he rushed toward Kyle with great vigor.

(Come! I will defend against your blow, and then I will push you back!)

Kyle prepares his body to receive the blow.

Bang!

Ryouma's body who come rushing at Kyle flew into the air.

(What?! Are you stupid?! If you jump into the air like that, you will be unprotected until you landed!)

With such judgment, Kyle raised his left-hand overhead.

While he was still mid-air, Ryouma bent his body back.

He put all the power from his muscles into this blow.

“Eat this!!”

A blow that was very strong.

It struck Kyle's body with the entire force of Ryouma's body.

Bang! Crack!

The sounds of something being broken can be heard.

And dull sounds just like when someone cuts a watermelon can be heard.

“What?!”

Astonishment appears in Kyle's face.

He turned his eyes slowly toward his left hand.

The first thing he saw was that the shield buckler on his hand had been cut in half.

Then he saw the sword that cut into his arm.



Gradually he can feel his left hand become hot and the skin start to become drenched by blood.

The warm blood flow passed through the armor and reached to his elbow.

Drip. Drip

A reddish drop appears on the ground.

The spot is gradually getting bigger.

“DAMN IT!”

Kyle's mind that was occupied by amazement begin to move once again, and he starts to swing his sword toward Ryouma.

However, despite such resistance, nothing happens.

Since Kyle's position is bad, Ryouma was able to avoid his sword easily.

(My left arm... Damn it I can't feel it anymore! My sensation seems to have been paralyzed too... Shit! What is he?! To cut through my shield and harming my left arm, the left arm that was covered completely with armor! Is he a monster?!)

“That kind of bleeding... I guess I got your bone and arteries. This is the end for you.”

Ryouma declared those words expressionlessly toward Kyle.

Ryouma told Kyle that the battle is over already.

“Don't joke with me! The duel is not yet over! I can still fight!”

Kyle holds up his sword.

Certainly, what Kyle had said might be true.

As long as one still breathing, they can still fight.

But still, for Ryouma, the duel is already over.

“It's useless... There's no way you can defend against my slash with just your right hand when even with a shield you failed to do so... Furthermore, that bleeding. If you do not take immediate action, such bleeding can kill you. However, you have no one to treat you at this place... Thus, this is your lost...”

Kyle's face becomes distorted.

As Ryouma had said, the victory and defeat have already been decided.

Kyle's left arm has its bone broken, and it already stopped moving.

Not to mention, Ryouma's slash also reached his artery.

Due to the shield and his left hand being completely covered by metal, Ryouma could not cut Kyle's left arm completely, but without a doubt that left arm is already completely broken.

His left arm won't be able to move anymore, unless he receives an appropriate treatment and has some rest.

Not only that, the blood that came out from Kyle's body also drains his strength without mercy.

If he does not stop the bleeding immediately, in the next few minutes, he will die of blood loss.

This is in the middle of a battlefield.

He has no friend to take care of such bleeding, and having an opponent in front of him. He can't take care of the bleeding himself.

“I guess, it was up to this far huh...”

“Indeed...”

Ryouma nods his head toward Kyle's words.

“...To think that I would die in this place... I'm a man without any luck...”

On Kyle's face, there's an expression similar to that of a warrior who had prepared to die.

“Are you the one called Mikoshiba Ryouma?”

“Indeed...”

“I see... While being an excellent tactician, you're also an excellent warrior that is better than me... Are you a monster?”

Kyle uses the word of “monster, “ yet it does not contain any contempt in it.

On the contrary, one can feel a word of praise from it.

“I was proud of being a knight without any equal... My sword art is superior to any other, and my mind was always able to see one step ahead of the others... Yet I can't surpass you in both, commanding soldiers and in a sword fight... Why did I lose? Is it because you're a man with more talent than I do?”

“No... I don't have talent better than you... I do not think of myself as inferior, but I also do not think that I have talent better than you.”

Ryouma answered Kyle's question with words filled with his true feeling.

Ryouma answered like that because he thought it is a courtesy toward the man who is about to die.

“Then why did I lose?”

“That was because you lost track of your own heart... It was the arrogance that caused you to lose...”

Kyle's eyes opened wide while he was listening Ryouma's words.

“My arrogance caused me to lose huh... Fufuhahahaha... Let me ask you one thing... Why are you following Princess Lupis? Is it money? Or power? You should know that such a thing is just an empty promise right? In this nation, the social status wall is very high... Even if the princess is willing to give you something, the other nobles won't!”

“My goal is neither money nor power.”

Ryouma shook his head in responding to Kyle's words.

“...That can't be... Then why did you fight? Why did you fight against us?Why?!”

Kyle's voice grew louder and louder.

He wanted to know.

The reason why the enemy in front of him fights and causes him to die here.

“That's an easy question... The reason we work together with Princess Lupis is because of you.”

“Because of me?”

“Indeed. You, do you remember you tried entrap Mikhail?”

Toward Ryouma's words, Kyle expression distorted.

He nodded his head as if remembered something.

“Is this about how Princess Ladine was heading toward the Rozeria Kingdom in the past?”

“That is right... We receive a request from the guild and were attacked on our way toward the Rozeria Kingdom. As substitutes for Princess Ladine.”

“I see, I did send fake information to Mikhail as a decoy. In the meantime, the real Princess Ladine was being transported to the Rozeria Kingdom... Which ended well in our part... Thanks to that I was able to get myself a position within Duke Gerhardt faction!”

Within Kyle's words, one can feel some pride in it.

Ryouma then spoke with a smile on his face.

“Indeed, that was a good move... That is if you hadn't involved us!”

That might be not 100% Kyle's fault.

Because he did not have any intention of involving Ryouma.

It was just coincidental that Laura has silver hair.

It was coincidental that Laura is the only silver haired mercenary within the port town of Fulzad.

As the result of that coincidence Ryouma is standing in front of Kyle.

Listening to Ryouma's words, gloom appears on Kyle's face.

If any person were to hear Ryouma story, they would not be able to keep cursing over their fate.

The fate where, because of one's own plan, it causes one to lose one's own life.

“It was my bad luck huh...”

Such words leaked from Kyle.

That was the words of grief that came out from a man disliked by the goddess of destiny.

“Indeed, you're unlucky...”

Ryouma quietly nodded.

“I have one request.”

Toward Kyle's words, Ryouma nodded his head once again.

Kyle's face is already pale due to the bleeding, and it was a matter of time until he died.

And Ryouma was not ruthless enough to insult someone who is about to die.

“I want to die, as a Knight... Can you be my opponent?”

Ryouma nods silently and fixed his stance.

“Thank you...”

“Sure...”

Ryouma silently raises his sword.

Kyle then starts charging at Ryouma.

“Uooooooooh!”

The moment Kyle's sword tried to strike Ryouma's torso, Ryouma slashes his sword down.

Gatsu

In the next moment, the sword slashes Kyle's head.

Kyle's body keeps moving away passing Ryouma.

Two steps, three steps...

Gradually Kyle's body stops moving and eventually fell to the ground...

Chapter 40

Elena's revenge

Day 182 after being summoned to another world.

At the time when Ryouma cuts down Kyle to the ground... Elena carried out her revenge deep inside the forest.

“Damn it! Protect the General and his family!”

“Follow me! We will break through!”

Different orders flew from here and there, it was a very confusing battlefield.

A person suggests protecting Hodram.

One tried to gather some knights and break through.

While their armor gets broken bit by bit, they desperately deflect the attacks that came at them.

However, reality is a cruel thing.

Their good luck was not being rewarded.

While holding shield and sword trying to break through the encirclement, one after another they fall down into the earth.

The number Hodram has on his side is about 30 people.

In contrast, Elena has 200 people under her command.

Because the troops of both sides are Knights, the effect from the difference in numbers has become apparent.

Currently, Hodram who received a surprise attack by Ryouma at his base got ambushed by Elena in the forest during his escape.

This trap is actually Ryouma and Elena's plan from the beginning.

While Ryouma acted as a hunting dog, Elena acted as the hunter.

Such measure has proven to be very successful.

“Elena-sama... We've done everything as instructed. After this what left is to take Hodram and his families heads...”

“Good... Looking at the process I can already see the result. Ryouma... You really did a great job...”

Elena nodded her head and mentioned Ryouma after hearing the report from her adjutant.

“But still... To think that it worked so well... That young man is really terrifying...”

Her adjutant muttered such words while paying attention to the battle development.

In front of his eyes, there is a battle that could be described as a total massacre.

Of course, it was Elena's side who massacred the enemy.

Having four to five knights ganged up against one of the enemy's knights, one can already see the result of the battle.

Furthermore, some knights also surrounded the area in case someone escaped.

Only death remains in the eyes of the knights who followed Hodram.

And this kind of situation was created by a man named Mikoshiba Ryouma.

In the adjutant eyes, fear toward such a man can be seen.

“I guess so, he's indeed a great man... Are you by chance scared of him?”

After praising Ryouma with a smile on her face, Elena asked a question toward her adjutant.

The smile she displayed previously disappear from her expression.

Her adjutant kept quiet toward her question.

Such attitude speaks his true feelings.

At least, for now, Ryouma has not made any move disadvantageous for the Rozeria Kingdom.

It would be fine to admire Ryouma's ability as an ally.

However, Elena's adjutant can't erase the uneasiness that appears in his mind.

(Certainly, he had made a lot of wonderful achievements. His strategies and commanding ability are great... However, he is not someone from this country. He's just a stranger... if such strategist were to get appointed by the enemy of this country and invade this country... What's going to happen?)

He acknowledges Ryouma's ability.

Of course, the adjutant's thought is nothing but imagination without basis.

And of course, he also understands that his fear was only his imagination, but he still fears Ryouma.

Such feeling is also attributed due to how Ryouma does not show any loyalty toward the Rozeria Kingdom.

He does not pledge his allegiance to Princess Lupis, nor does he have any sense of affinity for the Kingdom.

It was by accident that Ryouma and Princess Lupis become an acquaintance.

And the executives under Princess Lupis know that.

That's why Elena's adjutant was terrified of Ryouma's achievement and capabilities.

"I see, so you're really afraid of him huh? Well, I can understand the reason why you're that worried... I've received this kind of consultation several times already..."

Elena's muttered those words with lonely expression.

Hearing her words, the adjutant expression changed.

The worst possibility appears in his mind.

And that is the thing called assassination, but...

“I've told the others to not do something unnecessary... After all, we might accidentally stir up a snake by poking the bush which might end up badly for us.”

Elena shrugged her shoulders and said those words...

“Is that about the possibility of killing Mikoshiba Ryouma?”

Elena did not deny her adjutant's question.

After all, it was the truth that such plan was suggested by some people already.

(I guess, this is like the saying 'the nail that sticks out gets hammered in' huh?)

Within the adjutant's heart, there is feelings of vexation and also desolation.

Certainly, he was afraid of Mikoshiba Ryouma.

However, he never had an idea to assassinate someone just because of that.

(However, no one has achieved more than him in this civil war. It was thanks to him that Princess Lupis could take down General Hodram and Duke Gerhardt... Even though he is not a citizen of the Rozeria Kingdom, to eliminate someone who has produced the greatest achievement by assassination is a bit...)

One can say managing a nation is not all pretty.

For that, the adjutant can understand.

However, he can't really accept if they decide to assassinate Ryouma.

There's also another problem other than the adjutants reluctance to acknowledge such thing.

It is fine to choose assassination as a measure.

However, to perform that, a certain condition must be met.

And the condition is to 'not fail'

They have to be absolutely successful in doing it.

If the assassination ends up as a failure, they might actually create an enemy greater than Hodram and Gerhardt.

That's why the adjutant didn't feel the need to kill Ryouma due to such risk.

(The best outcome would be for him to serve the kingdom... Thus this country and Mikoshiba-dono can prosper together...)

But that is easier to say than done.

The social status barrier in this kingdom is quite high, even the citizens of the Rozeria Kingdom never dream to be a noble in this kingdom.

“Elena-sama, what your thought regarding this problem?”

“Mine? Of course, I'm against it... After all, it was thanks to him that I can kill Hodram... And if we fail with the assassination, we might actually end up with a more dangerous enemy...”

Toward the adjutant's question, Elena tried to speak ambiguously.

Even with such ambiguous answer, a conclusion can be drawn easily.

The problem is, whether or not one has the determination to carried out such thing.

When that time comes, Ryouma would never forgive the kingdom.

After all, no matter what the reason, in his eyes the Rozeria Kingdom has betrayed him.

Nevertheless, Elena is a knight of Rozeria Kingdom.

There's no choice for her other than to fight anyone who becomes the enemy of the country.

“But... If he really ends up as the enemy of Rozeria Kingdom... At that time...”

Elena's last words were being cuts off from reaching the adjutant.

“““Uoooooh!”““

“““We caught them!”“

Drowned by the cheers that sprigged up from the battlefield.

“Are you guys injured? Listen, we will try to break through the siege... Hold my hand tightly! Keep your focus and don't pay too much attention to the surrounding!”

Hodram is running around desperately trying to break through the siege while covering his wife and daughter behind him.

The horse-drawn carriage has turned into a useless thing after the horse pulling the carriage was killed by the enemy.

After the horse was killed, he quickly takes his wife and daughter out from the carriage.

However, Elena's encirclement is so strong that can be said to be like an iron wall, Hodram's escape routes have already been sealed off.

In the end, he had no choice but to forcefully break through the encirclement.

However, this world is not as sweet as to allow such story to happen.

Due to him trying to unreasonably break through the encirclement many times, the Knights around him began to decrease one by one.

“Father...”

The face of his daughter turns pale due to having people with murderous intent surrounding her.

Until just a few weeks ago, she was the daughter of an influential person within the country. Someone who has never dreamt of plunging into the battlefield.

Yet, fate threw her into current predicament.

“It's fine! I'm here after all! You just have to keep your attention toward me and run!”

Hodram raises his voice to reassure his wife and children.

He understands that if he shows a slight hesitation it would end up break the two ladies hearts.

“It's fine... Believe in your father.”

His daughter nods her head toward her mother words.

Or rather, is there even another option other than agreeing to it? the answer is none.

“Here we go!”

Following Hodram's words, the Knights around him nodded their head.

Their number is four people.

From the 30 Knights following him only four remains.

““Uoooooh!”““

They all rushed together to break through the encircling net.

They raised their swords.

Swinging those swords like mad dogs.

They completely abandoned their defense.

After all, they had realized that if Hodram dies, everything will end.

And such fact turns them blind.

“Your excellency! Over here!”

The encirclement collapsed for a moment due to their reckless move.

“Here we go! We will rush into the forest at once!”

Hodram's wife and daughter nodded their heads at his words.

After he confirmed that his families are ready, they ran at once.

“Your Excellency! Hurry up!”

Hearing their guard soldiers voice, they increase their speed.

3 meter until they will break out the encirclement.

(A little more! After we break through the encirclement, we will be fine! We can escape!)

Of course, there's no guarantee that they would survive even after they break through the encirclement.

However, the possibility for them to survive would raise more if they able to break through the encirclement.

“Kyaaaa!”

Suddenly Hodram can hear his daughter’s screams.

“You insolent! Get your hands off of her! She's my...”

Doga!

Dull sounds resounded.

“Mother! Stop! Don't be rough with her!”

In front of Hodram's eyes, his daughter was being held down by a knight, and his wife is crouching down after being hit.

It must be due to being hit by the Knights.

Gastric acid and saliva are leaking from his wife's mouth.

From the viewpoint of chivalry, people would never believe it if they were told that a knight just hit a woman.

However, such beautiful things only appear on a fairy tale, on the battlefield, everything's the same.

Hodram becomes hesitant.

(Damn it! Just a little bit more! What should I do? Should I help them? No, that would be impossible... Should I run just like this? But, that would mean deserting my daughter and wife...)

His line of sight crossed with his daughter.

He can see from her eyes that she wants help for her and her mother.

But he could do nothing.

Just a little bit more run and he would be able to escape.

It is practically impossible for him to help his daughter and wife here.

His cold-hearted mind begins to calculate the loss and gains.

It's impossible.

He thought he should run away and abandon his wife and daughter.

However, that would also make matters worse.

(If I abandon my wife and daughter, even if I manage to escape to the Thalluja Kingdom, the chance for me to get asylum there would be close to none...)



The Thalluja Kingdom would accept Hodram because he has his wife's parents family there.

But if Hodram were to abandon them here, his wife's family won't be able to forgive him.

His own instinct to survive made him unable to move.

The road left for him no matter which path he chooses only leads to ruin.

"General Hodram! Throw down your weapon and surrender, or do you want to die like this?!"

One of the knights step forward and shout loudly.

Hodram has already been trapped in a situation where there was nothing he could do.

(Damn it!)

The Knights already blocked his path to escape.

Even if he abandons his wife and daughter to escape, it would be hard for him to break through against them.

"What would you do?! Are you going to escape in front of your wife and daughter?"

Such cold words pierced Hodram.

Both his wife and daughter have swords around their neck.

"Dear..."

"Father..."

Their eyes stabbed Hodram more than anything.

With this, his fate is already sealed.

Hodram throws his sword on the ground.

"I surrender..."

“Very well!”

In response to Hodram’s words, the knight nods his head and raises his hand.

Several knights quickly jump out and arrest Hodram.

““““Uoooooh!”““““

“““We caught him! We caught him!”““

Such cheers resounded within the forest.

Everyone raises their sword overhead to express their victory.

“It has ended! Now the Rozeria Kingdom will enter a new era!”

“Glory to her highness princess Lupis! Prosperity to the Kingdom of Rozeria!”

Words of delight were shouted by the Knights.

“What are you guys going to do to us? Where is the trial going to be held? At Irachion? or at the royal capital? Can you guarantee the safety of my wife and child until the decision is made?”

Hodram asked the knight standing by his side.

“Trial? There's no such thing you know?”

Being looked at by the knight cold eyes, Hodram shows a surprised expression.

“What?! What do you mean by that? I've surrendered! That's why I have the right to receive a formal trial!”

Hodram already forgot that he was under arrest as he tried to grab the knight cuff.

Hodram thought that if he surrendered he would be put on trial by the princess.

Or at least he thought that his and his family lives would be guaranteed until the trial

is settled.

At worst, Hodram was sure that the kind princess won't execute his family.

(At least, at least if I get myself time to explain things, I could spare my family from execution!)

However, his thought was being overturned.

“What does this mean?! Didn't you pursue us by the order of princess Lupis?!”

“No, that is wrong...”

The knight immediately denied Hodram words.

Then a knight with armors dyed with the color of pure white shows up from the crowd.

“You seems to have misunderstood something, General Hodram...”

“That voice... That figure! It's you! Elena Steiner! You, why are you here?! You're supposedly participating in the attack at Irachion!”

Hodram expression completely changed.

After all, the person he had admitted to defeat is actually the person called Elena Steiner.

“Elena Steiner-sama? The one who's called [Rozeria's white goddess of war]?”

“Are you really that Elena Steiner?”

Those are the words that came out from Hodram's wife and daughter.

Such doubt is natural, after all, they have met someone who's hailed as the hero of the nation.

Elena nods her head toward Hodram's wife and daughter questions.

“Is it that surprising that I'm here?”

“Did you read all of my action?! That can't be! You're not someone who's capable of

doing something like that!"

Hodram roared.

"Oh, my? You are still the same man who's unable to accept reality huh? Overconfident with his own ability and looking down at the others... From the day we met, you've never changed... But the reality now is that I've caught you, can't you even accept this fact?"

"Shut up! You peasants! I'm a man from a family with high prestige! Not someone like you, you low life!"

Toward Hodram's words, Elena shows a bitter smile.

(Such a stupid man... He only thought about his ambition and lineage... Why can a man so full of talents like him be so stupid like this I wonder?)

"You bastard! Did you think you're better than I am? You're not someone who's equal to me!"

"Such pathetic person you are... That's why Fried-sama appointed me as the General back then, not you... Because that person realizes that your arrogance will erode the country... To think what that person had thought about you turned into reality! Can you see the knights present here? Do you think they hold the same view as you?"

"Don't joke with me! Fried-dono is the one who's unable to judge someone talents! For him to give the General rank to a commoner like you instead of me, someone who is born from a noble family! You people! Don't you think it was humiliating that the glorious knights order of the Rozeria Kingdom being led by a commoner? Furthermore a woman?!"

Hodram raises his voice and looked around.

However, no one presents shows an agreement toward Hodram's statement.

Rather, everyone shows a despise toward Hodram.

"W-What's with you guys?! Why are you looking at me like that?!"

The gaze that was directed toward Hodram.

Such gaze was the same as how Hodram directed his gaze toward a commoner.

The difference is that the gaze directed toward Hodram is the result of how Hodram had been leading the Knights order.

“You're really a stupid person huh... Do you know? The knights present here are of low rank and most of them are born from a family of commoners. You, someone who's born from such prestigious family never realize... The existence who actually supported the Knights order!”

Just like some knights who are from families that become a knight generation after generation, there are also commoners who become a knight.

However, for a commoner to become a knight, one must pass the exam 100 times harder than those who come from a prestigious family.

Those commoners make a hard effort until they vomit blood.

However, despite being the same knights, there was a clear barrier between those who are a commoner origin and those who came from a knight's household.

It was a daily routine to have a knight from prestigious family snatch an achievement from those who came as a commoner.

It would be always the Knights from the prestigious family who led the march.

People who originated as a commoner can only do the backstage work.

Among the Knights here, some of them lost their lover forcibly.

Some of them are people who've wrongly being convicted as a corruptor.

And the one who does those things to them is the Knights from the prestigious families.

It was always the commoner who undertake the dirty works and suffered because of it.

Not to mention the one who becomes the leader of the knight orders is someone who is obsessed with a special right.

If someone who becomes the leader is like that, then it won't be weird if those under him turn out hating him.

“Don't joke with me! We're born not equal! You can become a knight because of our sympathy! You all should follow us quietly!”

Hodram's emotion was high, his face flushed.

His behavior has become weird, but everyone presents understood what Hodram wants to say.

He wants to say the knights with commoners origin should follow him who came from a distinguished family.

“Such frustrating person you are... You... Oh well, whatever... You can bid farewell with that idea of yours...”

“You bastard! Are you going to break the national law?! I do have right for trial!”

Toward Elena's exclamation, Hodram could not hide his surprise.

He himself has been breaking several laws these past few days.

He does some unfair things, such as positioned someone he doesn't like to a border guard duty.

Embezzling military expenses, received bribes from merchants, and so on.

He also traps his colleague who becomes hindrance to him by accusing them of crime.

However, at the end of his life, what he relied upon was the law itself.

Even if that sounds unreasonable, he still relied on it.

After all, he does not have anything left anymore.

“Don't misunderstand alright? In official record, Hodram Alberg is attempting attack toward Elena Steiner, thus he ends up being killed in action. And his family are killed due to attempting to escape. That would be the official record... That was your favorite way of getting rid someone right? Hodram...”

Elena smiled sarcastically toward him.

“Can't be! That..... You can't do something like that! Where's the justice!”

“Justice? This is not justice you know? This is revenge... For my husband and daughter whom you had killed 10 years ago.”

Hodram face froze toward Elena's words.

Hodram's wife and daughter also show a surprised looks.

“What are you saying?! I don't do that! I don't know the matters about your family!”

“You don't have to put up some excuse... Five years ago, I heard from Heinz, a slave merchant who was ordered by you to do the jobs. He's the witness...”

Following Elena's words, her adjutant who stands beside her nodded his head.

“I don't know of such thing! I don't know that slave merchant either! And that merchant has already been executed! Where's the proof! The testimony!”

“Dear... Just what happened here? Did you really... Killed Elena-sama's family?”

“Father...”

“What?! What's with those eyes! I don't know anything about that matter! Are you not going to believe your father's words?!”

Hodram's family also begin to suspect him.

However, the more he tried to defend himself, the colder their eyes become.

It was obvious for them that Hodram has wronged everyone present.

“Let's see... I do not have such evidence indeed... But, I don't need such thing. Because what I want is to kill you...”

“You bastard...”

Hodram finally noticed the madness in Elena's eyes.

And also the fact he won't be able to escape.

“But, be relieved... I will also kill both your wife and your daughter together with you... My daughter was violated and killed, but, I will forgive you...”

Elena then pulls out her sword from its sheath and walks toward Hodram's wife and daughter.

“Wait! My wife and daughter have nothing to do with me!”

Hodram is immediately suppressed by the knights around him due to him trying to stand up.

“It does you know? After all, they are your family...”

“Wait! Somebody! Somebody stop her! This kind of thing, this kind of thing cannot be tolerated!”

Looking at Elena, Hodram desperately seeks help from around him.

However, amongst the 200 people present, no one listens to Hodram's plea.

Because everyone present wants him to die.

“Nooo! Please... Help...”

Tears appear from the daughter's eyes.

She understood that his father has committed an unforgivable crime.

And how much his father was hated.

However, she thought that among the 200 knights, there would be still someone who can show mercy.

“Goodbye... It was not your sins... But your luck was bad... At least, I won't make you suffer like my family...”

“STOOOOP!”

Hodram roared.

However Elena did not stop, her sword gently swayed in the air down to Hodram's daughter.

Zazh

Hodram's daughter collapsed to the ground, from her neck blood dyed the earth.

Zash

This time Hodram's wife lost her life.

"You bastard! How dare you! I will kill you! I will definitely kill you!"

Hodram eyes were red in anger, saliva scattered from his mouth.

However, being pressed by several knights, he was unable to move his body even for an inch.

"That's good! That's what I wanted to hear from you! Because I lived to see you like this!"

Elena walks toward Hodram with an innocent smile on her face.

(With this... Everything is over... Seria... Dear... Now you both can rest in peace... With this, all of your regrets, I've erased them all...)

The grudge that she had for these past 10 years will be released.

Inside her heart, the appearance of her husband and daughter appeared.

"With this, everything comes to an end... Hodram Alberg!"

Elena raised her sword overhead.

“Damn it! You bastard! You damned low life!”

That was the last words of Hodram Alberg, the mastermind behind the rebellion.

With this, the civil war in the Rozeria Kingdom came to an end.

Chapter 41

Princess Dilemma

Day 212 after being summoned to another world.

“...What should I do, I wonder...”

Princess Lupis directed her eyes toward the windows, looking at Pireaus royal city from her room.

The pure white dress which greatly exposes her chest highlighted her beauty.

She's the same person who wore armor and was revered as General Princess, but her appearance now is completely different.

However, the gloom in her eyes negated the brightness of her beauty.

“Fuuuh...”

A big sigh leaked out from her mouth.

Even though the bustling people in the town are so vibrant to the point of it reaching the castle.

Every citizen expected a new beginning with the civil war ended.

The civil war ended with Hodram death, slain by Elena Steiner's sword.

Hodram who was joined the true mastermind midway ends up being killed and become the scapegoat, while Duke Gerhardt survived. Although there are some indescribable parts, she was able to preserve the face of Rozeria Kingdom by having Hodram take all the responsibility.

The Civil war was already over some time ago, and one month has passed.

However, Princess Lupis who should have been full of hope was instead buried in worry.

“Father... Am I suitable to become the leader of this country? I who is getting lost just because of thinking how to treat that man?”

Many times she had asked such question toward her dead father.

That being said, of course, the dead cannot reply with an answer.

She asked a question to her father who cannot answer.

Such behavior shows what kind of state of mind she has currently.

“Fuuuh...”

Again, deep sigh leaked from her mouth.

“Your Highness...”

Meltina looked at Princess Lupis’ figure in sorrow.

Along with the crowning of Lupis, she was being appointed as the leader of the royal guard knights.

Although originally she had to carry out her work, she still needs to accompany the princess as her assistant like usual.

(As expected... Having Mikhail end up under house arrest has become a hard blow for us... If it were me alone, I don't think I can support her highness...)

Speaking about intelligence, Meltina and Mikhail were no different.

However, having a life experience of 10 years more than Meltina, was unexpectedly not something to be trifled with.

And Mikhail also is more suited in influencing the knights.

Although the civil war has ended, the princess' power is still unstable.

It would be natural for her to want a trustworthy human around her.

However, one of such important persons is under house arrest.

After the civil war had ended, Duke Gerhardt handed over Mikhail to Lupis.

Naturally, Meltina and Lupis thought he can get back to work just like that, but it was impossible.

Separately, Ryouma never said anything.

In the beginning, Mikhail's punishment was being postponed.

The princess was going to overlook his mistakes by offsetting it with his achievement during the civil war.

For his second mistake, Lupis and Mletina could not do anything other than pursuing Earl Bergston to make his faction stand as a bystander and not getting involved by giving unnecessary thought.

“You know... About Mikhail... Is it impossible for me to reinstate him? Is it fine if I just demote him? Can I solve his punishment with that?”

This time Meltina received a barrage of questions from Lupis.

It was already half a month since Mikhail under house arrest.

And the princess' question has been constantly repeated since then.

Meltina shook her head silently while sighing.

“No matter how much your highness wanted that, it would be impossible... Of course, I want to finish his house arrest punishment too, but...”

Meltina too wants to fulfill Lupis wish.

She does not think that Mikhail would be able to solve all the problem they had, but, since he's someone they both can trust, Meltina wants to reinstate him as well.

However, with the current situation, something like that was impossible.

The reason for that is it would make the others start questioning the princesses actions.

No matter how much the princess trusted him, she can't just reinstate someone who had failed twice.

The first failure can be solved by making Kyle take the responsibility, but, the second failure is deadly.

Although it was temporary, he had become a prisoner of war and also he ignored the orders of his superior officers.

Moreover, because of that, the plan to get rid of Duke Gerhardt fell apart...

Some executives have voiced of wanting him executed.

Even as a princess, it would be impossible to reinstate Mikhail without any punishment.

If she does that, it would be an act that can shake her regime, which has not yet found a solid foundation.

"I guess so huh... I'm sorry Meltina. For asking something unreasonable..."

Lupis also understands that as well.

The problem is despite her mind accepting some portion of her heart still unable to accept it.

Meltina had no choice but sighing inside her mind.

"Well, Mikhail aside... What do you think about our other problem?"

Lupis switches the topic and asks Meltina.

Her problem is not just Mikhail, there's another person that she doesn't know what to do with.

"Mikoshiba Ryouma is it... As I've expected, the nobles and the knights would definitely disapprove it... If only we can give him a job as a unit leader for his achievement, but..."

"Right..."

Lupis grimaced after listening to Meltina's answer.

The problem she has other than Mikhail is about Mikoshiba Ryouma.

If she follows the first contract they have, she supposedly helped him to prove his innocence, with the Rozeria Kingdom become their backing.

And after being proven innocent, they supposedly leave the country.

As soon as the civil war ended, Lupis have sent a letter explaining the situation to the local guilds as the princess of Rozeria Kingdom.

In this way, it has been already admitted that Mikoshiba Ryouma and his colleagues have done nothing wrong.

The only dissatisfaction they had was for being unable to prove the guild leader from Wallace Heinkell's wrong doings which cause him to escape any punishment, but such result is not a surprise.

If they follow Duke Gerhardt testimony, it seems like Kyle is the one who arranged everything.

And now with that Kyle getting killed by Ryouma, it is difficult for them to find someone with testimony and evidence.

And the neighboring guild masters could not pursue it further without any evidence.

In fact, there's a no way out of this anymore.

However, having Princess Lupis prove Ryouma's innocence, Princess Lupis has already fulfilled her promise to him.

Then no one can stop them if they want to leave.

But right now, they still remain in the royal castle.

That was because Lupis asked them to wait until her coronation is over.

"And the opinion from the knights are also still not good, regardless if they are from commoner or distinguished knight family."

"Right..."

"As expected to give a man not the citizen of Rozeria Kingdom an important post they think it would be bad for us to do that... Well, I don't even have to ask for the reason why it would be bad... However, if we force him into the knight orders, indeed one important post would be reduced then... And for a human being who aimed at a higher

post, and only to have the post getting snatched by a foreigner, I think we have to consider what would the others think about this..."

Lupis' face gets cloudy due to Meltina's statement.

Lupis is afraid of Mikoshiba Ryouma.

The fear was growing to the point where it was overflowing from her heart, after all, he is the man who makes it possible for her to be the queen of the Rozeria Kingdom, making the person who was in a disadvantageous situation previously now stand in front of the coronation ceremony.

"He who only move for himself, I don't think I want to appoint him as a knight either... After all, he does not have any respect for the royalty nor loyalty to the Rozeria Kingdom itself... It is too dangerous to have him as a person who protects the royal family, at least that is what I thought as a knight."

Evaluation regarding Mikoshiba Ryouma's ability is very high.

Such evaluation also comes from those who think negatively about him.

Thus if the princess is able to appoint him, he can get any job done as a knight.

However, when we asked how much confidence all of us have in him as a knight, everything went south.

As a knight, he has to protect the kingdom with his sword.

Military power is necessary for the king to control the domestic power.

But what if even the king do not have confidence with the person who holds the military?

Such situation would force them back into the era similar to the time when Hodram ruled the military.

The king might become the puppet and the country management becomes disturbed.

Right now Lupis has to rebuild the kingdom.

Nevertheless, she cannot just appoint someone with unknown origin to an important position within the knight orders.

Such opinion was not only voiced by her but also among the executive leaders within the kingdom.

“But... We can't let him out of the country like this! Absolutely not! What if another country manages to appoint him?!”

Lupis raises her voice.

This is what she was afraid of.

She is unable to give an important position to him.

However, what would happen if another country could?

“I know... I also agree with that... Your highness about that...”

Meltina hesitated to continue.

But Lupis is sensitive enough to understand what she wants to say.

“No! No matter how dire our current position is... We cannot do that!”

Meltina keeps silent due to Lupis clear rejection.

Silence ruled the atmosphere.

Meltina did not speak any words.

But what she was about to say had already been proposed by the others executive leaders, especially the nobles.

And that suggestion is an assassination.

With assassination, they will be able to have a good sleep without worry that another country might recruit him.

(I understand that... But... He's not even my enemy yet... He even kept his promise with me... Yet, am I going to pay him with death as gratitude? Furthermore...)

For better or worst, despite her naive kindness, she also possesses some wisdom in her.

If she was completely stupid, she would immediately fulfill her promise to Ryouma and let him leave the country without any fuss.

If she was evil, she would immediately command the assassination without thinking a second thought about her promise with him.

She does not want assassination because she does not want to be completely evil.

But since she is not stupid, she does not want him out of this country either.

Like that the princess stuck with the current predicament.

And there's also another reason why Lupis does not want to choose assassination as an option.

Hidden within her heart, something that she does not dare to say.

And that is...

(If I choose assassination, are we going to kill him using the knight of this country? If... If they failed to kill him, and he realizes that I was the one who commanded it...)

Of course, if all of the kingdom citizens unite and fight against Mikoshiba Ryouma, they could fight against him without a problem.

After all, an individual cannot conquer a country by him or herself.

However, Ryouma might still be able to escape.

Calmly thinking such probability would be less than a million.

However, it was still not absolute.

And Lupis feel that Mikoshiba Ryouma would be able to make something impossible become possible.

Like how he was able to make her the queen of this country...

(If I do that... That man will not forgive me...)

Such fears froze Princess Lupis movement.

*Kon*kon*

“Excuse me, your highness... Sudou-sama wants to have an audience with you. Is it alright for him to enter?”

Lupis and Meltina.

The silence between them ended with the door being knocked from the outside.

Meltina gazes at Lupis for confirmation which she gently nods.

“Come in...”

At the same time with her voice, the door is opened, and Sudou wearing a noble-like clothing is standing there.

“Pardon for my intrusion your highness... Are you troubled by something? We can't have that... Your beautiful face will be ruined if you show that kind of expression. Although it is presumptuous of me, if you do not mind, how about you try and consult with me Princess Lupis? Or rather, Your Majesty the Queen.”

As he came in, he speaks those words suddenly.

In the first place, he was not a man that can be easily associated with the word of 'polite’

“You bastard! How dare you be rude to her highness like that!”

Meltina tried to pull out her sword.

In this situation, no one would say she was short tempered.

After all, Sudou was very rude toward a royal family member.

“Meltina, stand down... and Sudou, you better try to be a little bit polite with your words as well. I will tolerate you this time, but there won't be any second times.”

In respond to Lupis words, Sudou bows his head respectfully.

But the people inside the room understood that he was just acting.

“Well, whatever... So, what is your business by coming here? As you can see, I do not have much free time right now. Briefly, state your business...”

After Lupis permits Sudou to take a seat, she immediately cuts to the chase.

“Oh come on... No need to be stiff like that. Well, Your highness seems to be in trouble after the civil war ended, so I thought of helping to remove your highness trouble from your highness’ heart, and come here...”

Meltina's eyebrows were raised.

She is curious as to what kind of respond Lupis would have from listening to those words, she then directed her gaze to Lupis.

However, Lupis was caught by surprise and unable to find any words to say.

“I see... Thank you for your concern... But, do you know why I was suffering, Sudou?”

Lupis questioned Sudou while feeling doubtful.

“Of course. Or rather, anyone would notice if they are just a little bit observant... Your trouble, it was about Mikoshiba Ryouma is it not?”

Lupis tried to suppress the unrest that raised inside her heart due to Sudou exclamation.

She will become the queen of this country thus she can't easily express unrest expression easily.

(Calm down! Don't let him see what is inside my heart!)

“What do you mean? Sudou?”

Lupis wanted to say, why did he think that... Asking Sudou while tilting her neck slightly.

However, for Sudou, her desperate act looks like an amateur theater play.

“Hou... I was mistaken huh... If that the case, then I should leave since I don't want to waste your highness' precious time.”

Sudou said those words while rising his body from the seat.

Meltina and Lupis expression completely changes.

“Wait a moment! Sudou-dono... her highness has already taken the time to listen to your talk while she is busy. Why are you leaving while not saying anything like that!”

Meltina immediately tries to halt Sudou.

“Huh? Well, I thought her trouble was about Mikoshiba Ryouma, but seeing it was not about that, my purpose of coming here has become meaningless... Since it would be rude for me to disturb her highness' busy time, I won't waste more time than this. That's why I tried to leave...”

Looking at Sudou's expression, both of them know that it was just a lie.

He just wants to tease Lupis.

He wants to make Lupis ask Sudou personally.

If she asks, it might lead to a breakthrough.

However, Lupis can't just admit easily that she was troubled by Mikoshiba Ryouma existence.

“I see... Sudou. Since I've taken the time, I will try to listen to your words. Go ahead and talk...”

Lupis set the table by ordering Sudou to talk.

“Sure... Well then, let's cut to the chase...”

Sudou decided to talk while sinking his body into the chair once again.

“Just like what I said earlier, the trouble about Mikoshiba Ryouma. Your Highness seems to be unable to decide what kind of treatment should be given to him, if he is a loyal person to the kingdom then your highness can just appoint him as a knight, but he was a mercenary, thus it is impossible. And if your highness allows him to leave the kingdom, another country might recruit him... And it is also possible that the country who appoints him will attack the Rozeria Kingdom.”

Toward Sudou's words, their expression changed.

It was exactly what they both have been troubled with.

“Your highness can't appoint him as a knight, yet also can't let him go out of the country. Nevertheless, your highness can't also kill him... After all, if a human with such high achievement ends up getting killed, it would definitely leave a bad record for the future...”

While talking about his opinion, Sudou keeps observing Lupis' expression.

(Fumu... Just I have thought huh? Well, for someone like her, she does not have the ability to control the man who is able to go head to head against Princess Sardina after all...)

His eyes have grasped the full ability of Lupis.

“Fuuh... So? How are you going to solve such problem?”

Lupis stop trying to pretend not to be interested in the topic.

She understood that there's no point in doing so anymore.

Sudou then continues with a smile...

“If your highness can't appoint him as a knight, and don't want another country to get hold of him. Why not appoint him as a noble?”

Lupis was at lost for words.

The same can be said about Meltina as well.

“Are you stupid? We're talking about a commoner here, what kind of a high heaven's dream is that, did you really want us to make a mercenary into nobility?”

Sudou nodded his head toward Meltina's question.

“Don't joke with us!”

Her high pitched voice resounded within the room.

“There's no way such a thing can be done! No rather, it would be more realistic to appoint him as a knight! Not to mention the nobles won't agree to it either!”

Lupis had no choice but nodded her head in agreement.

“Besides, how are you going to do that?! By giving him territory controlled by the government?!”

A territory is necessary to appoint a noble.

Of course, such thing is possible by giving the land controlled directly by the Royal family, or by giving the territory that the government got from the nobles that were lost during the civil war.

However, if they do that, the royal families power would diminish.

With civil war having come to an end, Lupis wants to have the whole country under her control.

For that purpose, she needs all the lands she has.

She wants the throne to have enough power even when they have to fight against all the nobles combined together.

Considering both the nobles and the commoners feelings, it is impossible for them to appoint Mikoshiba Ryouma as a noble.

However, Sudou already anticipated such rejection.

He then spread a map from his pocket onto the table

“This is? The map of eastern part of the western continent?”

Sudou nodded his head toward Lupis words.

“Your Highness can just take care of him by giving him this territory. What do you think? With this, the royal family won't lose their land, and the nobles won't fuss over it either... Furthermore, your highness does not have to worry about a revolt because of it... How about giving him the title of the lowest noble, Baron? Well, with this size, it usually needs the office of Duke, but it is this place, after all, so we can ignore that...”

Both Lupis and Meltina were at a loss for words due to Sudou's suggestion.

The land that Sudou has pointed his finger at.

The size it self is one-tenth of the whole of the Rozeria Kingdom itself.

Giving such land to a common people, much less a mercenary, that is an insolent act borderline insane.

However, just like what he had said, there's no fear of any objection from the nobles if she were to give the land to Ryouma.

Because nobody wants to be the lord of that land...

“Wortenia Peninsula...”

Lupis muttered some words.

With that words, once again, Mikoshiba Ryouma's wheel of fortune begun to roll.

Chapter 42

The determination of the summoned person

Day 227 after being summoned to another world.

(At the end of the day... I was too naive huh...)

Ryouma looked at the ceiling while lying on his bed inside his bedroom located within the royal castle.

Inside his mind, the stiff and firm expression of Princess Lupis appears.

Ryouma was called in the morning for an audience to receive the title of Baron and Wortenia Peninsula land from Queen Lupis.

Such situation is not what he had expected.

Because he was just recently talking with the Marfisto sisters about their next destination.

However, he could not decline the reward.

Of course, it was not because he was happy with it.

But because he noticed.

Behind Lupis expression, he can see fear toward him...

And also the murderous intent leaked by Meltina who was standing beside her.

If Ryouma were to decline here, Meltina will without a doubt instantly order the guards inside the room to attack.

They are very afraid of the human being called Mikoshiba Ryouma.

He was sensitive to that, that's why he avoided giving them an immediate response.



But first, he thought about why such decision come to being.

(First, why did they not want me to decline... What is their aim...)

Back during the audience.

Ryouma was able to suppress his anger toward Lupis, and able to give out words of gratitude.

(Wortenia Peninsula huh... Somehow the situation turned weird... That damned woman!)

Ryouma thought about the event that happened in the morning and cursed the person who caused it inside his heart.

Although he does not voice out the words.

Nobody is inside the room except him.

He told the Marfisto sisters to leave the room to give him the time to think by himself.

The red setting sunlight that came through the window dyed his face red.

His expression is as cold as an icy winter, despite a raging fury inside his heart.

Her gaze is filled with murderous intent.

The anger for being betrayed by the person one believed in.

Hatred toward Lupis is growing despite trying to restrain his feelings.

He thought it was stupid of him from the start, for believing in her.

But right now, he can't make any reckless moves.

At least for now...

After all, the one who betrayed him is the lord of this castle, the new queen of this country.

(They say the walls have ears and the doors have eyes... I need to be careful... After all, someone might be spying on me... It is also a bad for me to voice my dissatisfaction now... But the current situation is worse than the time when I killed that Gaies dude...)

Ryouma tried to clarify everything in his mind until his mind grew numb.

It was difficult for Ryouma to escape Ortomea Empire, but he succeeded back then.

However, it is different right now.

The condition and the situation are too much of a difference from last time.

That means of escaping from this place is realistically impossible.

(First, there are too many people who know my face and name... And if Lupis moves her hands toward the guild, I won't be able to live, since I can only do jobs via the guild...)

According to Lupis' letter, she had already explained to the guild and proved his innocence.'

In other words, if Lupis said 'I don't know anything about that letter' or 'what I wrote is a lie', then everything could be overturned.

Having the testimony being pulled back, Ryouma would lose his innocence once more.

(Damn it... Having royalty hold power can be troublesome too...)

Remembering how he was happy back then when his innocence was proven, he wants to puke.

Per say this happen might be because he underestimates the power of royalty.

One way or another, when we talk about the power of a country, one can say it was very powerful.

After all, with the power of a country, one can make black as white and white as black.

(I want to leave this country as soon as possible... But, it's impossible huh... Some knights have been placed around us in a pretext of guarding us... But I bet, if we make a stupid move, they will definitely try to kill us... Kuh! I'm such stupid man for believing what Lupis had said... Wait until her coronation over she said! Damn it! Don't joke with me...)

Originally, as soon as the civil war ended, he planned to leave the country.

That's why Ryouma did everything to win.

He avoided a close relationship with the nobles more than necessary, without

questioning Queen Lupis' intention.

He was not aware how he was being seen from his surroundings.

Such mistakes have become overwhelming.

Right now, one month has already passed since the civil war ended.

Ryouma still remained inside the castle even after his crimes had been cleared.

Because Queen Lupis asked him strongly.

At first, Ryouma caught that as a sign of anxiety.

The anxiety of carrying the responsibility of a country on her back.

Having her trusted person being punished, Ryouma thought his existence helped her to alleviate her anxiety a little bit, but that totally backfired.

Ryouma was told to stay in a room for a whole month.

What he does for a daily routine is only eat a nice meal, practice martial arts with Lione and the Marfisto sisters.

And have some small talks with Bolts and Genou to kill time.

This was the only calm days he spent since the time he was being summoned.

However, that was the story under the premise that he could leave the country.

If he realized that he has to remain in the country from the beginning, he won't spend his days like that.

Right now, what he needed is silence to think.

Quietly and surely, Ryouma analyzed the current situation.

(I can't believe it that that woman would break her promise... Forget it, I've decided to not think about such thing... One can say that I was making light of her too much, and put too much trust in her...)

He understood that she was afraid of him.

That is why he was planning to immediately leave the country.

However, the fear inside Lupis seems to not easily disappear just because he left the country.

(Wortenia Peninsula huh? If I think straightforwardly, this is a big success... But Lupis should never make this decision, and she should've known it... After all, appointing civilians as a noble in this kind of time would incite another rebellion... Lupis government is still highly unstable. If she makes the decision to make me, a civilian a noble in this kind of situation... then there must be something behind it.)

The thing she was trying to give to Ryouma is a noble rank and a territory.

If one think normally, such thing can be said as a great success.

However, Ryouma is not foolish enough to take it just like that.

Without any prior discussion, Queen Lupis pressed the noble rank and territory onto Ryouma, ignoring her previous promise.

If she really wishes to borrow Mikoshiba Ryouma's power, she should never do such thing.

She can just say that she might need help in the future beforehand.

His present situation.

The current state of Rozeria Kingdom.

And the attitude and expression Queen Lupis shown.

By assembling them within his mind, he immediately understood Queen Lupis' aim.

(I see... She wants to confine me huh...)

First and foremost, it was unnatural for her to give Ryouma a territory since she was afraid of him.

If that was the case then, there must be something that might limit him of his movement by giving him the nobility rank.

(First, I should think about the Wortenia Peninsula that I was given... There must be a problem there. First, it was bordering with conflicting neighboring country... Since Lupis was giving it to him with such pressure, there is no way to refuse it... In order to refuse this, he needs a very solid reason... A good reason... Come on, think!)

In order for him to decline the territory and the noble rank, he needs a sufficient reason without unnecessarily crushing her.

If he were to refuse it plainly, it would only paint mud on Lupis' authority.

Of course, Ryouma does not care if something were to happen to Lupis, but what situation would arise if he were to do something like that?

Lupis and Meltina will without doubt move to kill Ryouma using any means necessary. Meaning, receiving the gift or not, he will still see hell.

“In the end, I was too naive...”

Such self-mockery leaked from Ryouma.

He feels like he could not win against the power called 'the country'.

Even if he can win against Lupis individually, he could not win easily against her authority.

In a place where defiance will be punished severely, it would be bad for him to do that.

In other words, in term of life, Ryouma is weaker than Lupis.

He was wondering what he should do in this kind of situation...

(The one who can win against a country is another country...)

Ryouma' mind finally comes to conclusion.

“It seems like you're caught in some trouble, my lord.”

Someone spoke to Ryouma who was in deep thought.

Ryouma immediately raises his body and glares toward the owner of the voice.

“How did you enter here, Genou?”

“From the door, of course...”

Genou responded to Ryouma's question with a relaxed manner.

“What do you want? I do not remember calling you?”

“Indeed, you did not, my lord.”

While receiving Ryouma's words lightly, Genou settled down on a chair.

“We've checked the entire situation. About Wortenia Peninsula... It would likely be a troublesome land...”

“Why did you know that?!”

Ryouma narrowed his eyes toward Genou.

Ryouma have not yet even told the sisters yet, but this old man already knows about it.

“It is our occupation to find things. Something like this is an easy walk.”

“I see... I guess you're right indeed.”

Ryouma agreeing with Genou's statement.

Genou came from a clan well versed in stealing and assassination.

It would be easy for them to find information.

“Well... I was just being asked for some favor by those twin ladies. They said my lord's behavior is strange. That is why Sakuya and I tried to find out the reason.”

“Those two?”

Genou deeply nods his head.

Perhaps the sisters sensed some change in Ryouma's behavior, and then they asked Genou to do something.

One can definitely say their consideration is very wonderful.

“So, do you know what situation we're currently in?”

“Indeed... It is certainly troublesome. However, there's a silver lining in everything.”

“Silver lining? Which part of this situation that is a silver lining?!”

Ryouma instinctively raised his voice.

This all according to Lupis' expectation.

Being given land.

And having the land filled with trouble.

However, Genou lightly shook his head.

“My lord... Let's ride on Queen Lupis expectation. And then, we build our own power.”

Ryouma could not immediately nod his head toward Genou's statement.

After all, that was what he was thinking just a while ago.

“My lord, can you believe in us?”

Genou's words pierced Ryouma's heart.

“We've already made our decision. Lione-dono, Bolts-dono, and of course the two young ladies as well...”

Genou eyes look straight at Ryouma

His words transmitted his strong intention.

“That's right! Why didn't you say anything to us boy...”

“Young master! We will accompany you anywhere!”

The door opened, Lione, Bolts, Sakuya and even the Marfisto sisters show up.

It seems like they have come to a decision just like what Genou had said.

Fuuh

Ryouma facial expression relaxed.

“I can't guarantee anything you know? After all, I was just a commoner who never managed a territory before...”

In response to Ryouma's words, Genou nodded his head.

Everyone present understood such things.

Still, they believe in the human being named Mikoshiba Ryouma.

“Being able to admit that is already splendid enough, that's why the nobles are nasty because they always pretending!”

Lione's words represent everyone's mind.

They begin to sit surrounding the table to decide their future plan.

First, they are thinking as to how to respond to Lupis tomorrow.

After all, the deadline for his reply is tomorrow.

Tomorrow, he must decide whether or not he receives the rank and territory.

They all stay up all night to develop some countermeasures.

“Well, she does have her position to think about.”

Ryouma's words are somewhat cold.

One can say his words are filled with anger.

“Didn't you feel aggravated by it?”

Lione turns her gaze toward Ryouma.

“Let see... Well, I do not have a plan of forgiving her for this though...”

Ryouma responded with those words while laughing.

Everyone present looking at Ryouma's face can feel a cold shiver run down on their spine.

This is the laughter of a demon.

Filled with malice and hatred.

A dark and deep darkness, filled with ambition.

(Lupis... I don't know what situation you're in... But you've betrayed me... Well, It was also my mistake to get deceived like this... But this time, I will make you pay the price!)

Tonight, the light in his room remained lit until morning came.

Chapter 43

Those who move behind the scene

Day 260 after being summoned to another world.

“With that being said... My report ends here, is that alright? Your Highness.”

Sudou sat in the chair while facing Princess Sardina who was intently listening to the report. They were currently in Sardina’s private office which resides in the castle of the imperial capital.

Sardina was listening to Sudou report regarding his infiltration into the Rozeria Kingdom.

“I see, well, for now, everything seems to be going well... Though there are some unexpected things that happened, it was a great result in terms of weakening the Rozeria Kingdom... Saitou, is there anything you're concerned about regarding his report?”

Sardina asked Saitou who was standing by her side.

“Let's see, thanks to Sudou-san, we don't have to change much of our plans. If they managed to kill Gerhardt then Princess Ladine will also be killed. For you to be able of making the two of them survived... As expected of Sudou-san. Gerhardt aside, we have already invested a lot of money bringing up that Ladine.”

In response to Saitou’s compliment, Sudou's expression breaks into a smile.

“No no no, It's not really my power you see... That Princess... Oh right, now she's a Queen huh... Well whatever, that woman is really stupid! Even if he's a trustworthy aide, no matter how much she trusts him, to think that she was willing to risk everything for the life of a single knight...”

Sudou said those words of humiliation towards Lupis while also being humble

regarding his own ability, but in his eyes, one can see he held confidence in his own intelligence.

One can say such humility is a unique trait of Japanese people.

However, such humility is only a form.

And Sardina fully understood that he's actually a prideful and an arrogant person.

One can even say that he's the embodiment of arrogance.

“Although her head is smart, she lacks determination... I guess one can say that was the naivety of a kind hearted person huh?”

Sudou's criticism spared no mercy regarding Lupis since within his heart, he truly despised her.

“Ah about that... Indeed I too wonder what the enemy's doing... Well, it is good for us if the enemy is stupid though. But if they are too stupid, it makes me feel bored you know...”

Sardina shrugged her shoulders while laughing.

While Sudou nodded his head in agreement, Saitou refutes her words with a slight frown.

“But still Your Highness. Isn't it also troublesome for us to not destroy them completely this time?”

“Ah, it's about that guy huh... Tch! He's always getting on my nerves. I really hate that guy!”

Toward Saitou's words, Sardina spat out only hateful words.

Saitou's words made her mood instantly getting worse.

The face of a young man that looks a bit older compared to his real age appeared inside her mind, which she tried to shake off.

Well her hatred toward him is justified.

After all, he was the man who got in her way on more than one occasions.

“Well, but just like what we heard from Sudou's report, he's just someone who got involved by accident... I don't think he participated in this war because he knew of the empire's movements...”

“That's why it was infuriating... Just when we were figuring out where he ran off to, we found him participating in the war, and furthermore by accident? Thanks to him our original plan is barely intact!”

Toward Sudou's relaxed tone, Sardina raised her voice in responding.

“Well it's something similar to what we'd call fate? He is the one who managed to interrupt Gaies-sama's grand plan and also single-handedly kill Gaies-sama after all... Khukhuhu.”

“Fate huh...”

While looking at Sudou laughter, Sardina sighed.

The civil war in Rozeria was actually a strategy that the deceased Gaies had developed in order for the Ortomea Empire to conquer the eastern territories of the western continent.

The Ortomea Empire who already conquered the central part of the western continent was planning on conquering the eastern parts of the continent while enduring pressure from the Ernest Gora Kingdom situated in the north, and Kirtantia in the west.

The national strength of both countries can be said to be almost equal when compared to the Ortomea Empire.

The three-way stalemate has continued for almost 20 years. The countries understood that if two parties were to engage in all out war, the third party would be the one to benefit the most from it.

Despite continuous skirmishes at the borders of each country, none of the countries have launched a major offensive

Gaies, who was the military leader and also the main brainchild of the Ortomea Empire presented a solution to the Empire. It was an established fact that if the Empire (As it was currently) were to launch a major offensive against either the northern kingdom or the western empire that it would be difficult.

Thus, Gaies proposed them to turn their attentions towards the either the southern areas of the western continents or the easter parts of the western continent. Whilst the empire were deciding which to invade first, Gaies recommended them to conquer the eastern areas of the western continent first.

The southern areas were divided into 15 smaller countries which were always having territorial disputes with one another. This meant that there were quite a number of experienced soldiers that could be brought against the Empire's flag.

On the other hand, the eastern parts of the western continent had 3 kingdoms who had a very long rule, not only did they have a very strict status system, their citizens have tendency of being exploited by their ruler, thus it would be more easy for the empire to control the land after the empire conquers them by giving the citizen lower tax or other things.

With that reason, the Emperor made a royal decree to carry out Gaies's plans. The first steps into the plan was the civil war of Rozeria Kingdom which also bordered the Zalda Kingdom.

The national strength of each individual nation located on the eastern part of the western continent was much weaker when compared to the strength of the Ortomea Empire but if the nations were to join together even Ortomea wouldn't be able to grasp an easy victory. The purpose of the civil war in Rozeria Kingdom was to divide the eastern powers.

"2 years have already passed since the time Gaies received the decree from the emperor and since Sudou found Ladine. After King Farst the second gradually weakened due to age, we used poison to finish him under the guise of a disease and after all the preparations were completed, Gaies ended up passing, jeopardizing the plan."

One can say that the Empire's plan was in great danger because of Gaies summoning the man called Mikoshiba Ryouma.

“Indeed...”

Saitou nodded deeply toward Sardina's words.

“So? What happens to him?”

“Mikoshiba Ryouma huh... Well... He's really a crafty one... Although in the grand scheme of things we manage to complete all of our objectives, but...”

Sudou cuts his words midway.

From his expression, one can see he was at lost for words.

“What's wrong? Didn't you manage to confine him within Wortenia Peninsula?”

“Indeed... I did manage to do just that, but that man... He manages to pull a last minute condition...”

“Eh? What do you mean by that? Isn't he being confined within Wortenia peninsula with the pretext of rewarding him with the territory as Baron? What do you mean by condition?”

Sudou nodded with a serious look toward Sardina surprised expression.

“He's really a manly one... He manages to gauge his opponent vital point just by speaking and Queen Lupis was overwhelmed by him.”

After Sudou gives such a preliminary statement, he began to talk about what had happened during the audience that day.

That day, Ryouma immediately ask for an audience as soon as Lupis had the time for one.

“As expected, you're fast... Mikoshiba. I heard you already have an answer?”

Lupis asked Ryouma while maintaining a strong facial expression.

“Yes, your majesty... I'm very happy for your majesty's offer... If possible I wish to accept it, but...”

Ryouma swiftly cut his words and gazed towards Lupis, she noted that there was no fury in his eyes unlike the previous days. He was trying to show respect towards Lupis.

“Does that means you're going to refuse, Mikoshiba?”

Lupis's voice was getting low and cold, for a ruler to turn a mere commoner to a noble would be something many commoners would crawl and beg for but even without any words Ryouma understood from the atmosphere.

(Fuuh... Stupid.)

Ryouma suppressed the sudden insult that slipped into his mind.

“I wouldn't dare... I want to express my deepest gratitude toward your majesty... However...”

“What is it?”

“Before accepting the offer, there's something I would like to confirm... I will accept the reward after hearing the things I want to confirm...”

Due to Ryouma's evasive words, irritation begins to appear within Lupis' heart.

“Your majesty... It would be better for us to listen to what he's going to say, rather than letting him get away...”

Meltina who's standing beside the throne whispers to Lupis.

“Very well... Mikoshiba. What do you want to ask?”

Following Lupis permission, Ryouma bows his head as a sign of gratitude.

“Your Majesty... First of all... How much do you know about the current state of Wortenia

Peninsula?”

“What do you mean?”

Both Lupis’s and Meltina’s expression were dyed in a colour of doubt.

“Of course, I don't know much about it, but this Wortenia Peninsula seems to have a considerable problem, does it not?”

“Oh, my? Is that how so?”

Lupis attempted to probe Ryouma’s words for the first time and although Lupis did not plan on telling him the truth here, it was quite obvious to Ryouma that she was playing coy.

“Yes... I tried to find information about Wortenia peninsula, and I realized...”

Ryouma turn his eyes toward Lupis once again.

“This Wortenia peninsula, if we look at how big the territory was, it can be said to be a generous offer... However, there's a problem.”

The problem Ryouma told her are as follows.

1. The tax revenue is 0 because the place had been used to sent exiled criminals, basically, there's no proper citizen there. No citizen no tax income.
2. A lot of powerful monsters inhabited the land, as a result, it would be difficult for ordinary people to live there.
3. The existence of hostile settlements.
4. The issue with pirates who make their base in the territory coastal land.
5. It directly borders Zalda Kingdom, and is filled with constant conflict.

The first and second were the biggest issues. After all, without tax revenue Ryouma’s ability to develop his territory decreases significantly. It is a fact that nobles require revenue to maintain their country so giving a noble territory with absolutely no

revenue or funding is like throwing a live fish in a desert.

It was clear to Ryouma that Lupis bears malicious intent in giving this territory to him but for now Ryouma hid his emotions. One should only show their anger and hatred towards their opponents.

“I see! As expected of Mikoshiba Ryouma... In a short time, you've managed to gather that much of information... Does Mikoshiba-dono want to reject the offer because of that? Betraying her majesty expectation?!”

Meltina raised her voice to support Lupis who was rendered silent after Ryouma pointed out all the problem.

“Mikoshiba-dono! In response to your achievement in helping to defeat Hodram and Gerhardt, Her Majesty is already breaking customs by making you a nobleman! Indeed, Wortenia peninsula is not a rich territory. However, it is a vast land within the Rozeria Kingdom, comparable to that of a duchy territory. It would be a waste to leave the land as it is and refuse the offer, don't you think so?”

“I see... Does that mean your majesty wants me to develop Wortenia peninsula so that people can live in it?”

“That's right! Indeed it was a harsh land. However, if it's you, I believe we can have a high expectation!... Am I right?”

“Can I take Meltina's words as her majesty intent?”

One can say Meltina put in a good word. ‘Because you are an excellent person we give you difficult territories.’ One could interpret it that way. However, Ryouma was not easily deceived by such words.

Ryouma immediately averted his gaze from Meltina and turned towards Lupis who has a stiff expression on her face.

Towards Ryouma's question, Lupis had no choice other than to nod.

No matter what, she can't say that she wants to confine him after all.

And Meltina's words are within Ryouma's expectations.

“I see, so that's how it is! If that the case I would gladly help!”

“What's wrong? Is your wish just to confirm my will?”

Listening to Ryouma's reply, Princess Lupis's expression changes. Of course, Ryouma wasn't so stupid, everything fell within his plans. For him to corner both Lupis and Meltina...

“That's not it, Your Majesty! Because if I don't confirm your majesty's will, it would be hard for me to ask for my wish...”

A chill ran down the spine of the two who were about to hear Ryouma's wishes.

“What is it that you wish for...?”

“Well, I just want to borrow some money to develop the peninsula... to calculate the borrowed money, I need to understand your majesty intention first... And it is really a great honor for me that your majesty put your majesty's expectation on me. I will do my best to meet your majesty's expectation!”

Ryouma deeply lowers his head toward Lupis.

“Wait! What are you talking about? The Wortenia peninsula is your territory! The royal family should not have to fund that!”

Meltina slightly raises her voice.

While Ryouma's expression does not change.

“Ha? This is different! Her Majesty knows the situation within Wortenia peninsula, and she wishes for prosperity and development of the territory.”

“That's right! That's why we want you to develop the territory with your talent!”

“But then, I'm just a commoner. I have no property. Does Meltina and your Majesty know that?”

“Well, we do...”

“Since I have no money, I need to borrow from someone to answer Her Majesty expectation... But no merchants willing to lend funds for the development of the territory.”

Merchants hate taking such large risks, development of a territory that housed demi-humans and monsters. No matter from which angle one were to view it, there were no merits in developing it.

“That's why, with your talent...”

Meltina desperately tried to cling to their plan.

If they were overtaken by him, everything will burst into bubbles.

If they can't contain Mikoshiba Ryouma, Lupis would be crushed.

It is absolutely necessary for them to avoid such thing to happen.

“Of course! I have my talents. However, I'm not God! There's no way for me to develop such land without any resource... I think the wise Queen understand that?”

Ryouma bows towards the now pale looking Lupis. Originally she planned to impose him under unreasonable conditions but since it managed to proceed this far she could not refuse him because she had already affirmed her will previously.

“How much do you need?”

“Your majesty!”

Lupis ignored Meltina's scream. They were not alone, other nobles were watching and there werethe knights who guarded the audience room. Lupis could not show any disgraceful behaviours in front of her people. She needs to show them that she is the monarch that would ask a commoner to do an important task.

“As expected of your majesty! Very understanding! Well then, the rough estimate fund that I need is around 100 billion baht!”





Pfft

Following Sudou's explanation, Saitou burst out into laughter.

For him who's usually calm and polite, this is an unusual occurrence and Sardina had no intention of reproaching his behavior either.

After all, she was also surprised because of the explanation.

Firstly, a cheap hotel in town is usually cost 100 baht per night.

Another 100 bath if you want to take meals in the morning and night.

That means, 200 baht is necessary for a person to live for a day.

With that, one can understand, how much the demands Ryouma had put forth.

“Such an incomprehensible amount... With that amount they have to lend the entire income of the kingdom!”

Following Saitou's words, Sardina also nods in agreement.

“Even for the Empire, it is impossible to put forth such an amount in one go...”

It wasn't an impossible task but no nation within the western continents are able to pass such an amount in one go since the income of a nation is fixed based on the annual budget.

Most of the things that are impossible to neglect such as salaries of the officials and capital investment in the military.

If the empire had to put out such amount in one go, they would have to spend hours working over the multi-years worth of budget.

Even for just the paperwork alone will take a lot of time.

That's why it is impossible for the Rozeria Kingdom which has smaller size compared to the empire.

Toward Sardina's words, Sudou nodded in agreement.

"I agree... However, it would be bad for them if they don't put some funds despite wanting to develop the land."

Opening up the forest, creating roads, hiring a work force and soldiers, preparing to take care of the pirates and demi humans. Money was also required to settle emigrates.

If one were to look at it from an economical standpoint, that much would be quite reasonable if one were to develop the peninsula.

"But still that many... Just what... Ah!... I see so that's how it is!"

"As expected of your highness... did you notice?"

Toward Sardina realization, Sudou smiled and narrowed his eyes.

"Did he really think he would be able to receive that amount of money? What if, he expected to get rejected and presented smaller demands?"

Sudou picked out a piece of paper from inside his pocket and presented it to Sardina.

"This is?"

"The list of things that Mikoshiba demanded from the Queen Lupis... I've confirmed that all of them are troublesome... It seems like the territory would be completely independent from the Rozeria Kingdom."

The clauses on the paper are detailed, and there are quite a few items.

Sardina looked at each of the conditions Ryouma put forward, from top to bottom.

Her expression then turns cloudy.

Ryouma was roughly ask for,

To leave all law, military, diplomacy, and economy to Mikoshiba Ryouma.

Exempted from a tax that nobles have to pay to the kingdom.

In other words, while being in a position of being a Baron, Ryouma held an authority comparable to that of a Duke.

“Did she... Queen Lupis... Really accept this?”

Sudou nodded his head answering Sardina question.

“I heard she's stupid... But to this extent... This is the same as giving freedom to a venomous viper...”

“It seems like her mind was dazzled by the amount of funds initially asked, thus she gave permission without much thought...”

“Well, I understand that... But still...”

This is the same as giving freedom to a very dangerous man.

Moreover, with the land.

“Well, the saving grace is no matter how much authority over the land he has, the land has no revenue and also unexplored... Basically, he has to create everything from nothing...”

“Saitou... Do you think the same?”

Sardina asked Saitou who was in silence since a while ago.

Land without tax revenue.

Filled with monsters.

No assistance from the Rozeria Kingdom.

Just what in the world can Ryouma do?

But Saitou could not say that...

Because he also slightly holds some fear toward a being known as Mikoshiba Ryouma.

Sardina diverted her eyes from Saitou.

Everyone within the room has the same feeling of anxiety.

“Sudou... Your plan... Are you sure it’s not backfiring?”

Sudou answered her question with silence.

Sudou himself is the one who suggested Lupis to make Ryouma a noble.

And that is to confine Mikoshiba Ryouma.

Of course, Sardina also doesn't want Ryouma being appointed to another country.

Especially the countries located in the northern and western part of the continent.

But the plan might actually backfire...

Such anxiety binds the three people inside the room.

“Well, it's fine... Sudou... Don't let him out of your sight, understood?”

Sudou nodded toward Sardina's command without many words.

“Well then, your highness... The next plan, is it alright to assume that the invasion of the Zalda Kingdom begins?”

“Yes... As planned before, we're going to invade them next month... Sudou! You remember our plan right?”

“Please be relieved. Due to the previous civil war, unrest is spreading within both the aristocracy and knights. Because they need to focus on their internal affairs, Rozeria won't be able to reinforce Zalda.”

“Very well! I leave the Rozeria's matters in your hand!”

Toward Sardina's words, Sudou and Saitou nodded their head.

The Ortomea Empire began bearing their fangs toward their neighboring country.



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